THE SWIMMER

Screenplay

by

ELEANOR PERRY

Based on the story

by

JOHN CHEEVER

THIRD REVISION
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Horizon Pictures, Inc.
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HA 1-6810

FADE IN:

Black screen. But movement. Sound of a man whistling: bright, cheerful, melodic. The movement of the blackness becomes more pronounced. Up and down, up and down with a slight sway. As the image slowly resolves, we begin to see the suggestion of hair. Now we sense that the object in front of us is moving and that we are moving too, but the object seems to be traveling away from us at a slightly greater rate of speed. The whistling continues. The image begins to be distinguished as the back of a man's head. He is apparently walking and CAMERA is TRACKING him. The black, soft-focus uncertainty of a few moments ago has become a fine neat network of close-cropped hair. Holding this ECU of the back of the head and neck of a man, our frame is now wide enough to suggest his surroundings: trees and bushes; the green woods. Shimmering dapples of pale yellow light break through the leafy overboughs to complement the harmonic sweetness of the whistling.

All the while the man has been gradually increasing his pace so that we reveal first his neck, then his athletic, muscled shoulders, then his torso in bathing trunks and finally his full figure. Clearly, we are following a well-built and healthy man, jaunty of step, through the luxuriant foliage of a summer wood.

Now, with a full shot of our subject, whose face we have not yet seen, CAMERA's pace remains constant as we TRACK. His path is about to break out of the woods. The foliage overhead thins and the light becomes stronger.

Then, and suddenly, we burst with him on to a breathtakingly lovely scene: the manicured lawns, formal garden, swimming pool and handsome home of Helen and Donald Westerhazy.

The pool and the house seem small in the deep BG of our shot. Also in the BG stretched out on chaise longues on the terrace are the owners of the house. If we were near enough we would see that Helen has her eyes closed and is probably asleep.

Her body is inert. Her arm hangs limply over the chair. Don, who is puffy and hung-over as we shall discover later, is sipping a drink and sitting at a more upright angle.

Discovering them simultaneously is the man we have been following whose name is Ned Merrill. He lets out a joyous whoop of greeting and breaks into a dog trot across the lawn.

At the sound of the shot Don lifts his head to peer at the approaching figure. (Apparently Helen hasn't heard it.) As Ned comes closer, Don stands up and shades his eyes.

Ned has reached the formal garden, the beds staked out around a life sized classical female nude in marble. He runs past the figure, pauses for an instant to slap it sharply and sassily on the buttocks, laughs with pleasure at his action and continues towards the pool.

By this time Don has recognized him and is waving. Ned waves back continuing his sprint.

The pool is angled in such a way and is enough of a distance from the house that in a moment when Ned plunges into it, the sound of the splash still does not wake Helen.

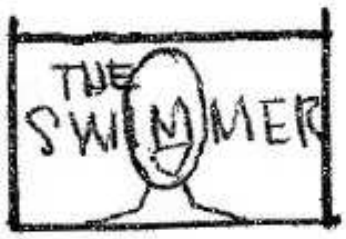
Ned reaches the edge and without breaking his stride, he leaps and arches into the high, flat trajectory of a racing dive. CAMERA HESITATES a split second at the edge of the pool, then leaps up and if still in pursuit of the now-swimming man.

CAMERA (shooting down from above) manages to overtake Ned as he reaches the far end of the pool. Here we expect him to come out of the water and greet Helen and Donald. Instead, he ducks under and kicks away in a well-executed racing turn. During this maneuver, CAMERA HOLDS, SWIVELS, and as he kicks off on the return lap, CAMERA again TRACKS him from above. As Ned begins his second lap and CAMERA STARTS TO MOVE IN PURSUIT:

TITLES BEGIN

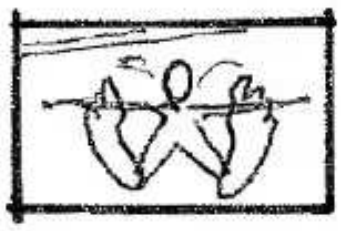
NOTE: Titles will be in reverse of the normal order, with final title being the name of the film.

Final Title over
CU Ned in pool.
Camera holds as...

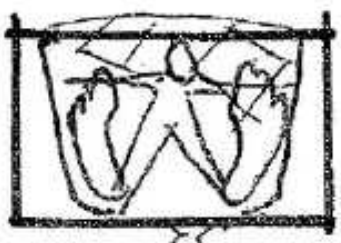


1

Ned flips back away
from Camera.
Camera holds locked
position.


2

Martini glass drops into
frame close to lens. Glass
fills screen and we see
Ned through it.


3

Camera dosa not move.
Ned flips forward directly
into camera.
He reaches for glass and...

3

Pulls glass to him as
Camera begins to pull
back slowly.

4

Camera continues pull
back to include Don,
right screen.

Silent toast.

5

Throughout titles, Ned is swimming rapidly from one end of the pool to the other. Simultaneously, CAMERA is TRACKING from above, sometimes descending for a CU of his head (we hear his deep, strong, regular breathing), sometimes pulling back for a FULL SHOT of his body. (We see the controlled splash of his powerful kick.)

At each turn, CAMERA, as indicated above, HOLDS, SWIVELS and KICKS OFF with him.

Title sequence should give us the feeling that we and the CAMERA are active participants in the physical act we are observing.

On penultimate title, CAMERA RACES ahead of Ned as he nears the opposite end of the pool from which he dove at the beginning. CAMERA SETTLES into position at the edge of the pool to await him.

Ned bursts from the water facing us, heaving half his body into the air. Simultaneously, as we see his full face for the first time, flashing on the screen is our final title:

THE SWIMMER

He is breathless and gasping and smiling directly at us -- a wide open-mouthed, exuberant grin as he swallows air.

FADE FINAL TITLE — 1

He sinks back into the pool and floats on his back smiling with pleasure as he looks up at the sunny summer sky, clear except for a strand of cumulus cloud in the west. — 2

Don's hand reaches into the frame with a Martini on the rocks. Ned treads water and reaches for it with a wide appreciative grin. — 3

NED
Hey, thanks! — 4

Don is squatting beside the pool. Ned holds the glass up in a silent toast and drinks. We can sense how delicious the icy cold gin tastes to him. — 5

DON
So it's not because our service is bad? — 6

NED
(happily)
What're you talking about? —— 7

DON
(with mock severity)
That you've stayed away so damn long. —— 8

NED
(with a grin)
Oh well -- you know how it is! — 9

DON
Where you coming from? —— 10

NED
(still smiling broadly, gestures with his thumb)
Oh -- over yonder! —— 11

He finishes the drink, hands the glass back to Don and heaves himself easily and gracefully over the side of the pool. They walk towards the terrace. — 12

DON
God, it's wonderful to see you, Ned. You look great. — 13

NED
Feel great. —— 14

DON
Come on, where've you been keeping yourself? —— 15

NED
(casually)
Around! Around! Around! What a day! Ever see such a beautiful day? —— 16

DON
(wincing)
Haven't looked. Drank too much last night. —— 17

They've reached the terrace. Don collapses into a chaise. Ned crosses to the sleeping Helen. Gently, he shakes her sandaled foot. He bends over her. — 18

NED
How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O Prince's daughter! — 19

Helen opens her eyes and squints with puzzlement. Then, as she recognizes Ned a look of pleased astonishment crosses her face. She reaches up and throws her arms around him. — 20

HELEN
Neddy! Oh Neddy -- what a surprise! — 21
(she kisses him on the cheek)
We didn't know you were out here. How <u>are</u> you? — 22

She releases him and grimacing at her own headache eases herself back into the chaise.

NED
(smiling)
Bet you drank too much last night. — 23

DON
<u>Everybody</u> drank too much. — 24

HELEN
It was that rum. I drank too much of that rum. — 25

NED
Whose party? — 26

HELEN
Our own. Don't worry you didn't miss a thing! — 27

DON
Usual Saturday night bash. — 28

HELEN
Same old jokes, same old faces. We've all known each other so long there's not even anyone to flirt with. — 29

NED
(teasing)
I'd have flirted with you. — 30

HELEN
(affectionately)
You're practically a new face! — 31

DON
How're things Ned? Have a good summer? — 32

NED
(exuberant)
Oh sure! Just great!
(bends over Helen)
Come on, love, how about a swim? — 33

HELEN
(weakly)
Uh-uh. — 34

NED
(taking her by the hands)
Come on, puts oxygen in your blood. Good for a hangover. — 35

HELEN
(groaning)
What in the world makes you think I'm hung over? — 36

NED
(tugging at her hands)
I'll race you! — 37

HELEN
(pleading)
Neddy! Please! No! — 38

He releases her. She settles back and closes her eyes. — 39

NED
How about it, Don? — 40

DON
Are you kidding? — 41

HELEN
(with a vague wave
towards the bar tray)
Relax, Neddy -- have a drink. —— 42
(she opens her eyes)
Go on -- sit down and tell us
what you've been up to.

NED
Nothing to tell. Same old —— 43
thing --

At this moment the screen door slams and a man comes out of the house. It is Stu Forsburgh. He is Ned's age but unlike Ned, shows it. He is overweight, with a paunch and thinning hair. He is dressed in trousers, shirt and tie and a sports jacket.

NED
(astonished and
delighted)
Stu!

Stu is equally delighted. They clasp each other warmly.

STU
How are you, Sport?

NED
Okay! Never better!

STU
Gee I'm glad to see you, you
old monster!

NED
What the hell are you doing
here?

STU
Just stopped over -- been on
the Cape for three weeks --

NED
Why didn't you let us know?
Lucinda'll be furious!

STU
How is she?

NED
She's great!

STU
And the girls?

NED
All grown up -- knock-outs!

STU
(giving him a good look)
Don't know how you do it -- you haven't changed a bit!

NED
Hey, where'd you get this?
(pats Stu's paunch)
Why've you got all those clothes on?

STU
We got to get into town and catch a plane. Peggy's upstairs packing.

NED
(appalled)
On a day like this -- you're going to take a plane? Don't give me that, man! Look at that sun! Look at that water!

STU
Got to get back to the shop --

NED
(grabbing his lapel)
Do you know how long it's been since we had a swim together?

STU
Don't remind me --

DON
(at the drink tray)
What'll you have Stu?

NED
(to Don and Helen)
We're old bunk mates. We went to the same camp when we were kids!

STU
(to Don)
Gee, I don't know. I drank too much last night.

DON
A diluted Martini?

STU
Okay.
(to Ned)
Boy I'm out of practice for the kind of party you throw around here. We don't go in for that in Columbus unless it's New Year's Eve --

NED
I told you not to accept that transfer.

STU
What else could I do?

NED
(indignantly)
Quit! Why the hell would anyone want to live in Columbus?

STU
Well -- it's healthy.

Stu's wife, Peggy, leans out of an upstairs window.

PEGGY
(calling)
Stu! Did you pack the pill case?

NED
(hooting at Stu)
Healthy!

STU
(calling to Peggy)
The vitamin case is on the night table, honey!

PEGGY
(with a big smile)
Don't tell me that's Ned Merrill down there?

NED
(waving)
How are you, honeybunch? Come on down!

PEGGY
Half a minute.

She disappears from the window.

NED
(even more exuberant)
God, Stu I didn't realize how much I missed that ugly old mug of yours! Who you riding the bar car with these days?

STU
I drive to the office.

NED
Drive?

STU
(shrugs)
That's what it's like in Columbus.

NED
Listen, take off those clothes -- we'll have one quick swim.

STU
I'm not up to it. I'm beginning to feel my age --

NED
You crazy? You're a year younger than I am.
(To the others)
At camp I never let him forget it either!
(To Stu)
Remember how we used to take off our suits and swim for miles up that river? We just never got tired --

STU
Thirteen, fourteen, fifteen -- we had nice new pink lungs in those days.

NED
The water up there, remember? That transparent, light green water! It -- it felt different!
(MORE)

NED (Contd)
(the memory in his eyes)
God, what a beautiful feeling! We could have swum around the world in those days!

STU
That was before we ever touched a drink or a cigarette.

DON
Or a girl.

HELEN
(rousing herself)
That doesn't sap a man's strength!

NED
Or I'd be in a wheel chair today!

Peggy has come out of the house. She is lithe and attractive and only slightly tense under her badinage.

PEGGY
Ned Merrill -- still bragging!

Ned crosses to her and hugs her.

PEGGY
Oh I've heard those old school boy stories! You all made them up!

NED
Figured that out, have you?
(hugs her again)
Now let's settle this nonsense about your taking a plane.

PEGGY
(indicating Stu)
Settle it with him. I like it here. More and more.

NED
First of all Lucinda'll have a fit if she doesn't see you --

PEGGY
Well I don't think that's exactly true.

NED
(to Stu)
I can run you up to the house in ten minutes --

A slight uncomfortable pause.

NED
(urging)
Come for a minute -- just to say hello --
(to Don)
Okay if I borrow your car?

DON
(confused)
Well sure but --
(he looks at Helen)

HELEN
(to Ned)
Honestly they haven't time. We promised to stop at the Grahams for a quick goodbye drink. You come with us.

PEGGY
(her eyes still on Ned)
Of course he'll come with us.

HELEN
(to Ned)
You haven't seen their new pool, have you?

NED
Whose pool?

HELEN
The Grahams'.

NED
Did the Grahams put in a pool?

DON
(nods)
Wait till you see it. They spent a bloody fortune.

NED
(puzzled)
When did the Grahams put in a pool?

DON
This spring.

NED
(seemingly still puzzled)
This spring?

HELEN
(to Peggy)
Did you get the suits off the line?

PEGGY
My God I forgot all about them!

Ned is thinking hard about something. A far away look has come into his eyes.

HELEN
If they're still damp, I have some plastic bags you can use.

STU
(to Peggy)
Better get them, honey and finish packing.

PEGGY
(her eyes on Ned)
Oh there's time --
(she crosses to get a drink)

NED
(suddenly to Don)
Listen, the Biswangers have a pool, haven't they?

DON
Biswangers?

HELEN
(to Don)
You know, those awful people on Oak Hill Road.
(to Ned)
Sure, they have a pool.

NED
(almost to himself)
I could do it.
(he frowns with concentration. He is thinking hard and hears none of the following small talk)

STU
(to Peggy)
Go on, honey, finish packing.

PEGGY
(impatient)
I will in a minute!

STU
I want to get the suitcases down --

PEGGY
(irritated)
Columbus isn't going to fly away, you know!

STU
I want to put the suitcases in the car.

DON
We'll do it when we get back from the Grahams.

STU
Aren't we going to drive over?

DON
(gesturing)
It's the next house.

Suddenly Ned lets out a whoop of triumph.

NED
I could do it. I could really do it!

HELEN
Do what, Neddy?

NED
Now with the Grahams there's a string of pools that curves clear across the county to our house! Listen --
(he counts carefully on his fingers)
The Grahams, the Lears, the Bunkers. Then a portage through the Pastern's Riding Ring to the Hallorans and the Gilmartins. Then up Alewives Lane to the Biswangers, then, uh, wait a minute -- who's next -- I can't think --
(he looks at them, panicky)
I had it a minute ago, I -- who is it?
(his panic increases)
Who is it? Who's next to the Biswangers?

HELEN
(gently)
Shirley Abbott.

NED
(with great relief)
Shirley Abbott. Then cross Route 424 to the Recreation Center Pool, then the Clydes, and that's it.

DON
Who are the Clydes?

NED
That little ranch house at the bottom of our hill.
(stricken)
What if they don't have a pool? God, that'll ruin it.

DON
Ruin what?

NED
I've been figuring that if I took a dog-leg to the southwest I could swim home!

Helen and Don exchange the briefest of glances.

HELEN
Well but -- why would you want to?

DON
I don't get it.

NED
(leaping up)
Pool by pool! Don't you see? They make a sort of river all the way to our house!

HELEN
(vaguely)
Well I suppose you could put it that way --
(definitely)
Now Neddy, why don't you have a drink and then we'll all go to the Grahams --

NED
(who hasn't heard a word)
I'll name it the Lucinda River after my wife!

PEGGY
(an edge to her voice)
The Lucinda River! That's quite a tribute.

NED
(happily)
It's like New Math -- it's New Geography.

He dashes to the pool and dives in in one long unbroken movement. The others watch him.

STU
(laughing)
Always hurled himself into the water like that. God, what energy!

PEGGY
He keeps himself in shape.

STU
Oh come on, he always ate like a horse. Never put on an ounce.

Silently, they watch Ned for a moment. Stu and Peggy are smiling -- each a different sort of smile. Helen and Don look slightly anxious. Ned has reached the far end of the pool and hoists himself exuberantly over the curb.

STU
Look at him. Wouldn't use the ladder, not Ned!

Ned, without a backward glance, is striding hurriedly away in the direction opposite to that from which he appeared.

DON
Hey Ned! Where you going?

NED
(calling back, not breaking his stride)
I'm swimming home!

STU
Hey Ned!

Ned keeps on going.

HELEN
(on her feet now and worried)
Neddy! Come back!
(he doesn't answer. To Don)
Where'd he get that nutty idea?

DON
He's just joking.

HELEN
You sure?

DON
Sure. We'll find him waiting for us at the Grahams.

PEGGY
I'll finish packing --
(she hurries off into the house)

HELEN
(still anxious)
Swim to his house! Why would he want to do that?

STU
Listen, I know Ned -- always loved to kid around. Hasn't changed a bit.

They watch as Ned leaps over the shrubbery way at the other end of the grounds.

STU
Hasn't changed a bit!

CUT TO:

THE GRAHAM'S

This is a medium priced house for this community, rather modest compared to the Westerhazy's, but it is clear that the Grahams have gone all out with the landscaping and the pool. The pool is a fancy pretentious shape, unlike any other pool we shall see in the film. Betty Graham is in the pool. She is tanned, a little plump, about forty.

When she sees Ned approaching she screams delightedly.

BETTY
Neddy! Neddy!

She swims towards the steps, rushes out and gives him an adoring hug.

BETTY
Gosh it's good to see you. You look wonderful.

NED
So do you fatso!

BETTY
(indicating her figure)
Isn't it awful?

NED
Too much high living.

BETTY
Where'd you come from?

NED
Don and Helen's.

BETTY
Where are they all? Aren't they coming over?

NED
Sure -- they'll be along.
(he crosses to the pool and surveys it)
Well! Well! Well!

BETTY
What do you think?

NED
Terrific. Absolutely terrific!

BETTY
Cost a lot. But Howard's had a marvelous year. Next summer we're going to build a pool house over there. You know with dressing rooms and a little playroom with a bar.

NED
Wow! Some set-up!

BETTY
(Xs to outdoor bar)
What're you drinking?

NED
Nothing for me thanks. I'll have a swim and be on my way --

BETTY
Don't be silly. You just got here. Gin and tonic?

NED
Plain tonic.

BETTY
Well that's a switch!
(pours it for him)

NED
Where's Howard?

BETTY
Listen.

We are aware of the sound of a light motor coming from around the other side of the house.

NED
What's that?

BETTY
You'll see!

She has her own drink now. She sits.

BETTY
Sit down, for goodness sake.

NED
Well, I've got to be -- well, for a minute.
(he sits)

BETTY
Gosh, it's been a long time.

NED
Yeah -- what a rat race. Never lets up --

BETTY
(after an instant)
You didn't think he'd make it, did you?

NED
Who?

BETTY
When I first started going out with Howard you made fun of him.

NED
I did? Why?

BETTY
Because he kept track of every penny he spent in a little notebook.
(she adds indignantly)
He didn't have a family to run to the way you did.

NED
I was just jealous.

BETTY
Of Howard? Really!

NED
Sure, I was crazy about you.

BETTY
(terribly pleased)
You never said -- I didn't know that! Oh go on! You were having a big affair with Lucinda!

NED
Why do you think I got smashed at your wedding?

BETTY
Because Lucinda was dancing with Roger Bunker, that's why!

NED
(laughs)
What a long memory you've got Grandma!
(he senses that Betty is hurt because he's put her on. Looks for a way to make amends)
No kidding though, you've got a gorgeous pool.

BETTY
(a bit snappy)
I've got everything I've ever wanted.
(a pause. She looks at him)
Funny the way things turn out, isn't it?

The sound of the motor has been getting louder and now from around the house comes Howard sitting on a midget tractor-lawnmower. He is an ordinary-looking, tense, somewhat smug man, with little humor, literal minded. At the moment he is having the time of his life. He brings the tractor to a stop close to the terrace. Betty and Ned cross to him.

HOWARD
(matter of fact but pleasant)
Oh! Hello -- Ned.

They shake hands.

HOWARD
How do you like my new toy?

BETTY
Isn't it cute? Next year we're going to get the "luxury optionals." Padded seat and a canopy.

NED
(frowning at the tractor)
Sounds as if the timing is a bit off --

HOWARD
Timing?

NED
Let me take a look at the distributor.

Howard gets off to watch him as he lifts the small hood, turns and twists something here and there. Then Ned gets on the tractor and starts it up. He rides it as rapidly as it will go in crazy circles on the lawn to Howard's obvious displeasure. Ned is enjoying both that and the ride.

HOWARD
(to Betty)
It's not a racing car you know.

BETTY
Well he fixed it.

Ned comes to a stop and gets off the tractor. He pats it fondly. They cross back to the terrace.

BETTY
Ned adores our pool!

HOWARD
Hate to tell you what it cost. Specially designed. Not from a catalog or anything.

NED
That's for sure.

HOWARD
Betty's birthday present -- so what the hell?
(he is mixing himself a drink)
How come you never put in a pool at your place?

NED
(shrugs)
Never got around to it.

HOWARD
Too bad. Helps the resale value.

NED
I don't have to worry about resale value.

HOWARD
'Course not. All the planting you put in and the tennis court. You'll get a hell of a lot more than your father paid for it.

NED
If I ever sell it.

HOWARD
Right person has to come along. It takes time.

NED
I want the girls to be married in that house.

HOWARD
(frowns at Betty)
But how can --

BETTY
(quickly)
I've always preferred home weddings.

NED
Won't be long now. Our drive looks like a parking lot. Boys all over the place.

Puzzled, Howard is trying to catch Betty's eye. She resolutely avoids looking at him.

BETTY
(to change the subject, quickly)
Gosh, it's a glorious day.

HOWARD
(gestures)
I don't like the look of that cloud.

The three of them stare up at the cloud.

NED
(exuberant)
It's beautiful. It's like a dream city! As if we're looking at it from the bow of a ship! Lisbon, Naples, Istanbul --

HOWARD
Hackensack!

He laughs at this heavy handed joke. Betty gives him an irritate glance.

NED
If I could get away from the office -- I'd take Lucinda sailing around the Golden Horn -- see all those glistening white domes and minarets against the sky!

BETTY
(to Howard)
Why don't we travel more?

HOWARD
What for?
(an expansive gesture)
We've got everything we need right here at home.

Sound of a car horn from the direction of the driveway.

BETTY
(jumping up)
That must be the Hollises!

She hurries towards the driveway, Howard jogs after her. Immediately, Ned dives into the pool. He swims the length rapidly with a short choppy crawl, hoists himself out easily at the curb and trots off. We can hear voices of greeting in the driveway but no one is yet in sight.

CUT TO:

THE HAMMARS

A free form pool. In the background a unique contemporary house, mostly glass. The kind of house that might have been built for himself by a very gifted architect.

Several yards away from the pool is a lovely garden. Mrs. Hammar, an old lady, is bending over to cut some flowers. She has a basket on one arm on which she lays them. She is over seventy with snow white hair, a majestic figure. She wears pearls and a graceful print dress -- very much the grandedame.

She hears Ned splashing in the pool and straightens up, surprised. She cannot tell who it is from this distance so she walks slowly towards the pool. By the time she is close to the pool and Ned is three quarters of the way towards the opposite end, she recognizes him. She stops rigid with anger. As Ned leaps out of the pool she hurries to confront him.

NED
(very warm and friendly)
Good afternoon Mrs. Hammar, how are you?

MRS. HAMMAR
(icy)
Who gave you permission to use my pool?

NED
(surprised at her tone)
I'm Ned Merrill!

MRS. HAMMAR
I know who you are.

NED
(amazed at her reaction)
I'm a friend of Bob's.

MRS. HAMMAR
You were never a friend of Bob's -- you never even came to see him.

We see a flicker in Ned's eyes as if he has suddenly remembered something unpleasant and long buried.

NED
How is Bob? Is he better?

The woman looks at him for a moment. Her lips tighten.

MRS. HAMMAR
My son left me this house --

NED
(backing up a bit)
Well I -- I have to be on my way --

MRS. HAMMAR
Just one minute Mr. Merrill.
(he stops)
You're not welcome here. Don't you ever set foot on my property again.

Ned draws in a breath, then turns and walks quickly away. Mrs. Hammar stands where he has left her. Tears are running down her cheeks.

CUT TO:

THE LEARS

Ned is turning up a graveled driveway. At the entrance is a green tube for the New York Times and lettered on the tube the name "Lear". As he walks up the drive Ned's face is sobered for the first time. Obviously the encounter with Mrs. Hammar has shaken him up a bit. He cuts across the lawn towards the back of the house. We can hear splashing and the voices of two girls.

When Ned approaches the pool we can see the girls. They are both in their late teens. One has short blond hair and is leaping up and down on the diving board. The other one is in the pool. The blond girl, whose name is Muffie, waves enthusiastically at Ned, her smile is friendly and welcoming.

MUFFIE
Hi Mr. Merrill, how are you?

NED
(brightening considerably)
Hi there Muffie!

MUFFIE
Mother and Daddy are at the Club!

NED
(the memory of Mrs. Hammar is still fresh)
Do you think they'd mind if I had a swim?

MUFFIE
Of course not! Help yourself!

She dives into the pool. The other girl has reached the ladder and is climbing out. Her long brown hair is plastered to her head, her eyelashes are stuck together in little points. She wears no make-up and her perfect willowy body is shown off by a brief bikini. Water is running in rivulets down her face and body. She looks like a young mermaid and she smiles happily at Ned.

NED
(astounded)
It isn't -- Julianne Hooper!

JULIE
(delighted)
Yes it is!

NED
(staring at her)
I can't believe it. You're all grown up!
(another flashing smile from Julie)
How come we never see you anymore?

JULIE
I guess you don't need me any more --

NED
Of course we need you, Julie -- we're always looking for a baby sitter --

JULIE
(a reproachful laugh)
Oh Mr. Merrill!

She picks up a towel and starts to dry her hair. Ned watches every move she makes with intense pleasure.

NED
Hey! How about next Sunday night? You busy?

JULIE
No but --

NED
Okay, you're hired. Still live in the same place?

JULIE
Yes but --

NED
I'll pick you up at seven.

JULIE
You're putting me on!

NED
No, I'm not --

JULIE
A baby sitter! What will Ellen and Aggie think?
(she laughs embarrassedly)

At this point there is a shout from Muffie still in the pool.

MUFFIE
At last! I'm parched!

A tall boy, about seventeen, in bathing trunks, is coming from the direction of the drive carrying a carton of cokes. He comes up to them. Ned looks at him blankly.

JULIE
Mr. Merrill, this is my brother Vernon.

Muffie has come out of the pool. She takes the bag from him and puts it on the table.

NED
Your brother!

They shake hands.

NED
(to Julie -- gesturing the height of a small boy)
But your brother was --

VERNON
(with a grin)
Boy, I sure liked that XK140 you used to have!

He crosses to Muffie who is taking cold bottles of coke out of the bag.

NED
Julie, I can't get over you. How old are you now?

JULIE
Twenty last month.

NED
Going to school?

JULIE
(shakes her head)
I've got a job.

MUFFIE
(calling)
Want a coke, Mr. Merrill?

NED
Sure --

He and Julie join the other two. Vernon hands them each an opened bottle. The four of them sit beside the pool.

MUFFIE
(to Ned)
Gee, I miss Ellen and Aggie! Where are they now?

NED
They're -- swimming at the Club.

MUFFIE
They are?

JULIE
I'd just love to see them.

VERNON
Let's all drive over.

NED
I haven't any clothes with me.
I'm swimming home.

MUFFIE
(laughing)
You're swimming home?

NED
Figured out there's a river of pools all the way to my house!

VERNON
That's more hiking than swimming.

NED
Not hiking exactly. Portaging.

MUFFIE
It's okay, if you like exercise.

VERNON
(to Ned -- with a laugh)
It's a nutty idea.

JULIE
(a withering glance at Vernon)
I think it's a brilliant idea.

NED
(his excitement returning, to Julie)
From here I go to the Bunker's, then a portage through the Pastern's riding ring, then the Hallorans and so on -- I've got it all mapped out in my mind.

MUFFIE
What are you doing it for?
(Ned looks puzzled)
Why do you want to do it?

JULIE
(quickly)
I think it's very original! As if he's an explorer or something. I mean it's an adventure.

NED
(approving)
Now you sound like a girl with imagination!

JULIE
Well I hate being like everyone else -- That's dreary.

NED
Come with me!

JULIE
(taken aback)
Well, gee, I -- I --

NED
Come on, live a little!

JULIE
(hesitates)
Well, I don't know if --

NED
Come on! We'll explore the torrential headwater of the Lucinda River!

Muffie and Vernon giggle at this.

JULIE
(with a cold glance at them)
All right -- I will!

She puts down her coke and jumps up, smiling at Ned. Ned rises and drains his coke bottle. He is overjoyed.

NED
Race you!

They take running dives into the pool and race to the other end. Ned wins. They hoist themselves over the curb, laughing and dripping. Julie's sandals are there. She slips her feet into them and they start off running over the rest of the lawn and down a slope to a narrow country lane.

COUNTRY LANE

Ned and Julie are walking down the lane. There are a few marigolds blooming in the grass and weeds along the side of the lane. Ned stops.

NED
(almost to himself)
Funny --

JULIE
What?

NED
Marigolds now.

JULIE
They're all over the place.

NED
They usually bloom later --

He picks a half dozen and hands them to Julie, shyly, like a country boy to his girl.

JULIE
(smiling with pleasure)
Lovely -- I love the colors --

They walk a little further in silence. Ned's eyes are on Julie, constantly admiring her. She catches him looking at her. He smiles.

JULIE
Mr. Merrill --

NED
Hmm?

JULIE
What did you mean before -- all that about my coming over to baby-sit?

NED
(puzzled)
Coming over to baby sit?
(he remembers)
Oh I was just joking.
(he looks at her)
I was teasing you.

JULIE
Gee, I wondered.

NED
(looking at her)
You used to be such a shy little kid. Always brought along a pile of school books, always dropping pencils and things. Never had a word to say.

JULIE
I thought plenty though --

NED
Thought what?

JULIE
Oh -- day-dreamed --

NED
What about?

JULIE
(gives him a side-long glance)
Oh -- lots of things.

NED
What sort of things?

JULIE
It's so silly. I mean it was such kid stuff.

NED
Come on -- tell me.

JULIE
(shyly)
I bet you never knew I had a big crush on you.

NED
You did?

JULIE
Oh I was mad about you. Out of my head.

NED
(terribly pleased)
You were?

JULIE
If Mrs. Merrill called me to baby-sit -- even at the last
(MORE)

JULIE (Contd)
minute -- I'd cancel out whoever I'd promised and come to your house instead.

NED
(laughs)
You must have lost a lot of customers.

JULIE
And then I'd spend about an hour getting myself fixed up. My mother thought I was nuts. I mean, I was just a kid to you but you were a -- god to me!

NED
(enormously pleased)
Now you're putting me on!

JULIE
Know what I'd do after the girls were asleep? I'd go up to your room and open your closet and touch your suits. Then I'd go into your bathroom and smell your shaving lotion. Then one time -- oh this is a terrible thing to admit --

NED
Tell me --

JULIE
I stole one of your shirts!
(she looks at him. He laughs happily)
When I was doing my homework up in my room I'd put it on. It made me feel as if you were all around me.

NED
(his spirits soaring)
Julie I -- I didn't know --

JULIE
When you'd drive me home late at night I'd pretend like mad --

NED
Pretend what?

They have been approaching a cross-road. There is a large red "STOP" sign ahead of them and on the side of the road an empty glass telephone booth. Julie heads for it.

JULIE
(indicating her sandals)
Got to tighten these things.

The booth is open. She sits on the seat.

NED
Let me --

During the following he kneels at her feet and unbuckles and tightens both sandals.

NED
What was it you used to pretend?

JULIE
(embarrassed)
I can't tell you. I was a <u>little</u> girl then.

NED
I want to know --

JULIE
(she starts out reluctantly but gets caught up in her own recital)
Oh -- that you were desperately in love with me -- but you were too honorable to say so because, well, I mean -- you were married.
(she looks at him. He is listening seriously. Reassured she goes on)
So I had to go to Paris to, you know, put an ocean between us. And no matter how many divine Frenchmen begged me I'd never marry. I'd just live there all pale and mysterious with huge tragic eyes. Then one night I'd be in some club in a fabulous Paris gown and I'd see you at the door -- tall, distinguished, a little gray at the temples --

Ned gestures at his temple where his hair is indeed turning gray. Julie nods solemnly. At this moment a sports car with the top down comes up the lane and to a full stop in obedience to the sign. It is driven by a very cute and radiantly young man. He stares at Julie in her bikini and whistles. Julie smiles.

NED
(angrily)
On your way, Mac!

YOUNG MAN
How'd you like a punch in the nose?

He races his motor and whizzes off. Julie leaps up from her seat in the phone booth.

JULIE
Let's go.

Ned takes her hand. They run across the Lane and start up the Bunker's drive.

NED
(still holding her hand)
Go on Julie -- you were in a Paris club and I was at the door --

JULIE
-- Well, I pretended your eyes would burn into me across this whole roomful of people and suddenly there'd be a hush and everyone would look at me. And then I'd just stand up and <u>float</u> towards you --
(she stops abruptly)

NED
And then what?

JULIE
(disengaging her hand)
That's all.

NED
(with a wild surge of happiness)
I -- I don't know what to say!

JULIE
(laughing)
I told you -- I was a real spooky kid!

During the last few exchanges we have been hearing the sound of voices and laughter refracted from the pool nearby. They have gradually grown louder.

JULIE
The Bunkers must be having a party!

As they round the house they see the pool and terrace in a hollow below them. The terrace is crowded with people, most of them middle-aged, many of them in bathing suits, all drinking. Only one person is in the pool -- a man floating on his back on a rubber raft. Everyone looks chic and prosperous and deeply tanned. White coated waiters are passing trays of icy drinks. Ned surveys the scene with glowing affection.

NED
How bonny are the banks of the Lucinda River!

JULIE
What?

NED
(looking at her with deep pleasure)
I'm so glad I found you, Julie. I don't want to lose you ever again!

At this moment his life seems as sunny and full of promise as this summer afternoon. He is up and excited during the entire scene at the Bunkers.

As he and Julie approach the terrace, a woman screams joyfully and rushes up to Ned. She is Enid Bunker, a little under forty, sleek and handsome.

ENID
Look who's here! What a marvelous surprise!

She flings her arms around him and kisses him. When she realizes him she looks appraisingly at Julie in her still damp bikini.

NED
This is Julianne Hooper, our baby-sitter. She just turned up -- like a good penny!

ENID
(a slight curl of the lip)
How fortunate for you, darling!

NED
(oblivious)
My God, that suntan! You look ravishing!

ENID
(all smiles)
Oh Neddy! We've missed you!
(she gives him a playful push)
You know where the bar is. Go and have a drink!

She rushes off to another approaching couple. We hear her screaming "look who's here!"

NED
(to Julie)
We'll have a quick one to appease the natives -- then we'll be on our way.
(he leads her to the bar)

As they go through the crowd many of the men greet him enthusiastically, many of the women kiss him. He introduces Julie over and over again. They react in various ways. Some of the men merely grin and eye her up and down -- or eye Ned with approving amusement. One man gives her a curt nod and cold look for Ned. A jollier one makes an oafish joke: "I'd like to sit with you, baby," or something to that effect.

The women are either jealous, disapproving or highly amused. Whenever anyone asks, "Where's Lucinda?" he answers, "Be here any minute," or "She'll be along -- "

One woman who asks: "Where's Lucinda?" is warningly poked by another and hushed up but Ned doesn't notice nor does he see the two of them whispering after he's walked on.

It is clear that Ned is among friends. At the bar the Bunkers' negro butler welcomes Ned warmly.

BUTLER
Mr. Merrill!

NED
Hiya Stanley? How's Esther?

BUTLER
Will she be glad to see you, Sir!

NED
Esther's my girl!

BUTLER
(beaming)
Yes Sir!

NED
(indicating a wine bottle in a silver cooler)
Champagne?

BUTLER
Yes Sir!

The Butler takes the bottle out of the cooler. Ned examines the label.

NED
Dom Perignon! Wow! That's for us!

The Butler gets out two champagne glasses and fills them. Ned raises his glass.

NED
(to Julie)
Here's to sugar on our strawberries!

Julie giggles. They touch glasses and drink. The Butler has replaced the bottle in the cooler. Ned snatches the bottle and gives the Butler a mock-gruff look. The Butler grins. Glass in one hand and bottle in the other Ned wanders away from the bar looking for friends. Julie follows.

NED
Rusty! Rusty Towers!

RUSTY
(cordial)
Hi Ned!

NED
Listen champ, don't forget to count me in tomorrow!

RUSTY
Tomorrow?

NED
(a little anxious)
Our Monday golf date!

RUSTY
(confused)
Gee, Ned, I don't know --

NED
(slapping him on the back)
I'll meet you at the Club at five!

RUSTY
It's starting to get dark so damn early --
(he sees Ned's eager face)
Okay, maybe we can get in nine holes --

NED
(relaxed now, grinning)
Nine holes! We're going to play all nineteen, champ!

He wanders on happily through the crowd with Julie, occasionally refilling their glasses with champagne.

NED
Brian! How are you, Brian!

BRIAN
(astonished)
Ned! My God.

NED
I heard you were in Europe!

BRIAN
Just a couple of months -- at the Geneva office. I've seen you since then.

NED
Nope.

BRIAN
You and Lucinda. You were at our Christmas party.

NED
(a little anxious again)
You mean last Christmas?

BRIAN
(his face clouding)
Listen, I should have called you. I heard what they pulled on you over at your place and I think it was pretty stinking --

NED
What?

BRIAN
I don't care how big a firecracker that new guy is! Brother, that story really jolted me.

NED
(his eyes wandering past Brian)
What're you talking about?

BRIAN
I kept thinking what if some young smart-ass comes into our shop and does that to me --

But someone has caught Ned's eye and he has turned away. He hands the bottle and glass to Julie to hold which she does with difficulty. He puts a finger to his lips. The someone he has seen is an extremely good looking woman probably in her early thirties. She is wearing an audaciously cut bathing suit. Her back is to Ned and she is talking to a man. Ned sneaks up behind her, puts his arms around her and hugs her tightly. She looks around. When she sees Ned she smiles delightedly.

NED
Hello, beautiful Cynthia!

CYNTHIA
Neddy darling!

NED
(looking around)
Where's Carter?

CYNTHIA
(happily)
Haven't you heard? We're separated!

Julie has joined them.

NED
This is Julianne Hooper, our baby sitter.

CYNTHIA
(her eyes on Ned)
Run along to your babies, dear.

NED
She's with me. We're swimming across the county.

CYNTHIA
(this time she looks at Julie)
How healthy and young of you!

NED
(admiring her)
Who the hell else out here could wear a suit like that?

CYNTHIA
(all smiles again)
Why don't you come over for dinner tonight?

NED
Sure, if Lucinda hasn't made a date --

CYNTHIA
Lucinda!
(she makes a little face, then coldly)
Well, congratulations!

She turns her back abruptly and joins a nearby group. At this moment a man comes determinedly up to Ned.

DAN
Ned!

NED
Danny-boy! How are you, chum?

DAN
I've been trying to reach you! Look, I heard of an opening -- sounded perfect for you, your experience. Smaller shop than you're used to but quality --

NED
I don't want to make a change --

DAN
These guys have a good reputation. I think if you approach them right -- take a cut just at first --

NED
No honestly, I can't afford to --

DAN
Cut it out, Ned. We're friends, aren't we?

NED
(puts his arms around Julie)
Say hello to Julianne.

DAN
(briefly)
Hello Julianne.
(his attention immediately back to Ned)
Now tell me where I can reach you.

NED
Call me at the office -- we'll set up a lunch.

DAN
For Christ sake, you don't have to pretend with me!

Ned starts to move off with Julie.

NED
(over his shoulder)
Honest to God, Dan, I haven't got a worry in the world!

His arm still around Julie he guides her towards the pool. They are stopped once or twice while Ned is greeted and kissed some more. At the edge of the pool they put down the glasses and the now-empty bottle, and dive in.

The man is still floating on his back on the rubber raft. He doesn't move nor glance her way as Julie passes him. Ned stops alongside of the raft, treading water.

NED
(loud)
Buzz! Hey Buzz!

The man on the raft turns his head slowly and stares at him with glazed eyes. Obviously, he is loaded.

NED
Know what day this is, Buzz?

Buzz looks infinitely bored.

NED
This is the day Ned Merrill swims across the county! This is the <u>day</u>!

Buzz turns his head away and closes his eyes. Ned laughs exuberantly and continues across the pool. Julie is already climbing out. Ned hoists himself vigorously over the edge, grabs a towel, dries his face and hands, tosses it to Julie. He takes matches and cigarettes from a container on a table and again takes Julie's hand. Conspiratorially, with a sly backward glance, he leads her away from the pool. Julie giggles. They begin to run.

Around the other side of the house, on the lawn, they find a large trampoline. Ned leaps up and down on it several times. When he jumps off, Julie leaps on it and bounces several times. He holds out his arms. She jumps off into them. He puts her down and, laughing, they run on.

CUT TO:

THE PASTERNS RIDING RING

A small grassy ring neatly enclosed by a low white fence. Several low jumps set up at intervals. One or two trees just outside the fence. Far in the background, stables and a large house. No one is around. The sun is shining. It is a typical scene out of Country Life.

Ned and Julie are leaning on the fence, still smoking the cigarettes they took from the Bunkers. Julies' eyes shine as she surveys the Ring.

JULIE
What a place!

NED
Very horsey people.

JULIE
I know. I used to baby-sit for them.

NED
How'd you like Ashey Pastern?

JULIE
Nice man.

NED
Steal one of his shirts too?

JULIE
Heavens no! He wasn't my type.

NED
I'm your type, huh?

JULIE
You were the most attractive man I ever laid eyes on --

Ned reacts to the past tense.

-- I mean, you are. You still are a very attractive man, Mr. Merrill.

NED
(with pleasure)
Don't weigh five pounds more than when I got out of college.

JULIE
(politely)
You're in much better shape
than my father, for example.

Ned reacts to this comparison. He gives her a look. Then smiling to himself he unlatches the gate and walks into the ring. He places himself several yards away from a jump, dashes swiftly towards it and hurdles it gracefully. He turns towards Julie.

NED
(triumphant)
How about <u>that</u>?

JULIE
Fabulous!

NED
Come on -- try it!

She runs through the gate and towards him. He motions her down on one knee, finger tips to the ground, takes the same position himself.

NED
All set? GO!

They dash together towards the next jump and hurdle it in unison. Julie sails over, her hair flowing out behind her. When they land they laugh delightedly.

NED
Another one?

She nods enthusiastically. Same business. This time when Ned lands he winces with pain and sits on the ground, holding his ankle.

JULIE
What's the matter?

NED
Twisted it.

JULIE
(sympathetically)
Oh! Does it hurt much?

NED
Be all right in a minute.

He stands, placing his weight lightly on that foot.

Let's sit down.

He hobbles a bit towards a place near the fence where the tree branches make a dappled patch of shade. Julie sits. Ned lies on his stomach, his chin propped on his hands, his eyes enjoying her, by this time, adoring her.

NED
What kind of a job do you have, Julie?

JULIE
Secretary. We're the biggest office supply company in New York.

NED
Funny -- I've never run into you on the train.

JULIE
I take the 7:22. I'm always the first one in -- so I make the coffee.

NED
Friendly office?

JULIE
(nods)
Two of the girls want me to get an apartment with them. Soon as we get our raises.

NED
Watch out! It's a big wicked city!

JULIE
I know. I've had some <u>experiences</u>.

NED
Like what?

JULIE
Well, one morning I was making the coffee and I happened to look out of the window. There's an apartment house across a court. A man was standing at <u>his</u> window looking at me.
(she pauses, then dramatically)
He was <u>stark naked!</u>

NED
(gravely)
That's terrible.

JULIE
I just stood there looking at him!

NED
You should report that to somebody --

JULIE
He's never been there again. I look over every morning.

NED
Lots of nuts around.

JULIE
(nods eagerly)
Once my boss sent me to deliver some record books. I got into an empty elevator and pressed twenty-six. Then a man got in and pressed twenty-seven. Then the door closed and the elevator started up. This man came right over and kissed me. On the mouth!

NED
(alarmed)
What'd you do?

JULIE
I dropped the record books.

NED
What'd he do?

JULIE
He picked them up.

NED
Then what?

JULIE
He gave them to me and the door opened on the twenty-sixth floor and I got out.
(she expels a breath)
Can you imagine! In a building on Park Avenue!

She uncrosses her legs and stretches her feet out in front of her. Ned puts his hand protectively on her foot.

NED
(softly)
How beautiful are thy feet in sandals, O prince's daughter --
(he strokes her leg)

JULIE
(moving her leg away)
That's from the Bible, isn't it?

NED
Song of Solomon.

JULIE
When I was a little girl in Sunday School they never mentioned that part of the Bible.

NED
You still <u>are</u> a little girl in Sunday School.
(soberly)
I've been thinking. I could meet you on the train in the morning and take you to your office -- when you have to go out on an errand you could call me and I'll go with you and I'll pick you up at noon every day and we'll have lunch together --
(his enthusiasm grows)
That's what we'll do! I'll take care of you, Julie!

JULIE
(inching a little away from him)
Oh I don't think that would work, Mr. Merrill --

NED
I won't let anything bad or mean or nasty ever touch you --

JULIE
Actually I don't eat lunch -- I mean, I need my lunch hour to have my hair done or shop -- things like that -- and --

Ned has been staring at her but not listening to her.

NED
Thy navel is like a round goblet --
(he lays his hand on her belly)
Thy belly is like a heap of wheat set about with lilies --

Julie firmly removes his hand.

Why don't you want my hand there?

JULIE
(moving her body slightly away again)
Because --

NED
That shirt of mine, Julie. Do you still have it?

JULIE
(shakes her head)
After a while I decided it was -- well, it was just a shirt. And I threw it away --

Ned looks very hurt.

I mean you had so many shirts I didn't think you'd miss it or anything -- Do you mind?

NED
No. But I wish you'd told me how you felt --

JULIE
Oh I couldn't. I would've died!

NED
(soberly)
There's so little love in the world. If it's kept a secret then it's wasted, don't you see?

Suddenly Julie utters a little cry and leans back.

JULIE
A bee!

She swings her hand through the air.

NED
Don't hit at it. It'll go away --

JULIE
(leaping up)
It's after me!

She dodges backwards and runs a few feet away. Limping a bit, Ned follows her. His hands swoop through the air around her trying to drive the bee off.

NED
(finally)
There it goes.

JULIE
(she is close to him -- within the arc of his arms)
Gee, I'm afraid of bees!

Ned looks down at her. Suddenly his arms fold around her. He presses her tightly against his chest and kisses her. Julie struggles in his grip. Finally she succeeds in turning her face aside.

NED
(tenderly)
Julie -- Julie -- Julie --

She breaks away from him and runs off through the ring to the gate.

NED
Julie!

She has dashed through the open gate and is running away. Devastated, Ned watches her until she is out of sight.

CUT TO:

A COUNTRY ROAD

Ned is limping a bit as he walks moodily along. He is feeling a little tired and cold. A small dog runs out of the woods and starts to follow him. It is a black and white smooth haired fox terrier of no great distinction. Ned stubs his toe on a rock and swears with pain. He sits down beside the road to examine the damage. The dog comes close and watches. Ned rubs his toe and looks at the dog. Its eyes are soft and sympathetic.

NED
(softly)
Come here, come here, boy.

The dog moves closer.

NED
(patting his thigh)
Come on, boy, come on.

The dog comes up to him. Ned pets it, scratches it behind the ears, strokes it affectionately. Finally he rises and starts to walk again. He looks to see if the dog is following him. It is. Ned smiles, pleased. They walk on.

CUT TO:

THE HALLORANS

This is an estate in the full sense of the word. The huge house is set a quarter of a mile back from the road. The entrance to the drive is flanked by tall wrought-iron gates, at the moment, open.

As Ned starts up the drive a limousine turns in after him. It is driven by a dignified elderly Negro with gray hair under his chauffeur's cap. Ned signals him to stop. He approaches the car, smiling.

NED
Hi there, Steve!
(he crosses to the car door)
How are you, Steve?
(he stops)
Oh, you're not Steve.

CHAUFFEUR
(pleasant)
No. How are you, Mr. Merrill?

NED
I'm a friend of the Hallorans.

CHAUFFEUR
Yes, I know.

NED
Mind if I ride up to the house with you?

CHAUFFEUR
(politely)
Not at all.

He is about to get out of the car to open the back door.

NED
Don't bother.

He opens the front door and gets in beside the chauffeur. The Sunday New York Times is lying on the seat. Ned moves it over. The car starts off. We see the small white dog has appeared at the entrance to the drive. He trots after the car.

NED
(a slightly anxious frown at the chauffeur)
How long have you been working for the Hallorans?

CHAUFFEUR
Going on two years now.

NED
What happened to Steve?

CHAUFFEUR
(pleasantly)
I'm afraid I don't know.

NED
(chummy)
What a character! Did he mangle the English language!

The Chauffeur doesn't answer.

We told him he ought to be on television.

Again no answer.

Big bass voice. You should have heard that guy sing!

CHAUFFEUR
(quietly)
A natural sense of rhythm?

NED
(enthusiastic)
You bet!

Suddenly something about the Negro's statement bothers him. He gives him a look. The Chauffeur is gazing

straight ahead, his profile pleasant and impassive. The car has circled the house and now comes to a stop in front of a four-car garage. Ned opens the door and gets out.

NED
I'll take them the paper.

CHAUFFEUR
(handing it to him)
Thank you.

NED
(sincerely)
Thank you for the lift. My apologies -- I don't know why I thought you were Steve --

CHAUFFEUR
(casually, very polite)
That's okay. Sometimes you all look alike to us too.

Ned walks off towards a tall hedge. He puts the newspaper on the ground and steps out of his trunks. The dog runs up to him. Ned picks up the newspaper and tries to hold it in some manner so that it will be a modest but not too obvious screen for his nakedness. This requires a little juggling as he is also holding his trunks. Several sections of the paper slip out of his grasp and fall to the ground. He picks them up and reassembles the paper rather messily, struggling awkwardly with its Sunday thickness. Finally he has a firm grasp on it. He pushes through an opening in the hedge. The dog follows.

The Hallorans' is probably the most elaborate pool we shall see in the film. A couple of beech trees overhang it. Everything about it says "lots of old money." Mr. and Mrs. Halloran are in their late sixties, both white haired, handsome, distinguished looking, and totally naked.

Mrs. Halloran is sitting at a table beside the pool. She has set up what looks like an outdoor office. There is a typewriter on the table, piles of papers, pencils, pens, etc., and a telephone. At the moment she is happily stapling tickets to form letters and checking names off a list.

Mr. Halloran is fishing beech leaves out of the water with a long-handled scoop. When he sees Ned, Mr. Halloran smiles warmly.

MR. HALLORAN
(with an amiable wave)
How are you, my boy?

NED
I'm swimming across the county!

MR. HALLORAN
Why I didn't know one could!

Ned crosses to Mrs. Halloran and presents her the Times with a flourish, putting it down on the table in front of her. This leaves his nudity totally exposed and he maneuvers slightly behind a chair which is pushed up to the table, although Mrs. Halloran isn't taking the least notice of him.

MRS. HALLORAN
(abstractedly)
Hello Neddy dear --

She is upset because he has laid the paper right across her work and quickly removes it to one side, rearranging the little piles of tickets, etc. She is a very organized woman. Mr. Halloran has crossed to them.

NED
Met your chauffeur on the way in.

MR. HALLORAN
Nice boy! Real sense of personal worth.

Mrs. Halloran has selected one section of The Times and is hurriedly turning the pages looking for something.

NED
Always got a lot of laughs out of old Steve.

MRS. HALLORAN
(her head in the paper)
Steve had no sense of personal worth.
(to Mr. Halloran as she folds back the paper)
It's <u>in</u> here.

MR. HALLORAN
(eagerly)
What does it say?

MRS. HALLORAN
(her eyes scan the item)
"The Real Estate Board has called the Halloran proposal a subversive attempt to blah, blah, blah ..."

MR. HALLORAN
Subversive! That's exciting!

MRS. HALLORAN
(reading on)
"The Association of Granges -- "

MR. HALLORAN
(explaining to Ned)
Farmers.
(to Mrs. Halloran)
What do they say, dear?

MRS. HALLORAN
They're calling us Communists!
(then, airily)
Sticks and stones! Sticks and stones! Sticks and stones!

Mrs. Halloran puts down the paper. She is elated. To Mr. Halloran.

It's going to be a tough fight, Theodore!

MR. HALLORAN
(Explaining to Ned)
We've petitioned for improved sanitation for the migrant grape pickers.

MRS. HALLORAN
Showers and flush toilets.

MR. HALLORAN
Such a fuss! You'd think we wanted them made out of pure gold.

NED
(looking at the pool)
Why are all those leaves in the pool?

MR. HALLORAN
Same damn nuisance every year.

Ned crosses, picks up the scoop and starts scooping out the leaves. His motions are slightly frantic. A small frown between his eyes.

NED
(calling to Mr. Halloran)
Your beech trees must be blighted.

MR. HALLORAN
No they're not.
(he squints up at the trees)
What makes you think so?

NED
Well look --
(he shows Mr. Halloran a scoop full of yellow leaves)
They're yellow!

MR. HALLORAN
Sure. This is the month they turn.

This statement disturbs Ned. He drops the scoop and crosses back to Mrs. Halloran.

NED
(indicating the pile of tickets on the table)
What're those?

MRS. HALLORAN
(continuing to staple)
Benefit. Keep-Our-Parks-Beautiful Association.

Ned picks up a ticket and examines it.

NED
(reading)
Gala Dinner-Dance --

MRS. HALLORAN
And nifty door-prizes!

MR. HALLORAN
(to Mrs. Halloran)
I'd like to win that Renault Sedan --
(to Ned)
Back seat flattens out into a double bed!

NED
(to Mrs. Halloran)
Put me down for a table.

MRS. HALLORAN
(hesitating)
Oh Neddy --

NED
What's the matter? I always support your Benefits.

MRS. HALLORAN
(firmly)
A table is a thousand dollars --

She still hesitates. He picks up a pen and carefully writes his name on the list. This makes him feel better. His spirits lift visibly.

NED
If you don't mind, I think I'll get wet.

He crosses to the end of the pool and dives in. As soon as he is swimming, Mrs. Halloran crosses his name off the list.

-- MR. HALLORAN
I wonder if he's come over to ask us again.

MRS. HALLORAN
He'll get the same answer.

MR. HALLORAN
(wheedling)
It's not so much money. Can't we pretend he's a disease?

MRS. HALLORAN
(very definite)
Ned may be a disease. But he is not deductible.

The phone rings.

MR. HALLORAN
(into the phone)
Hello. Hello. Sonny --
(he listens)

MRS. HALLORAN
Isn't he coming over?

MR. HALLORAN
He's at the hospital.
(he listens)

MRS. HALLORAN
(impatiently)
Ask him when he's coming over.

MR. HALLORAN
(to Mrs. Halloran)
He can't. Someone got thrown at the Horse Show.

MRS. HALLORAN
(disgusted)
Oh for God's sake. In my day people <u>knew</u> how to ride or they didn't <u>ride</u>!

MR. HALLORAN
(into the phone)
I know, Sonny. That's the penalty for being dedicated.

MRS. HALLORAN
Tell him Ned Merrill's here.

MR. HALLORAN
(into the phone)
Ned Merrill's here. He's swimming across the county.

Ned has just heaved himself out of the pool and is crossing towards them to get his shorts.

MR. HALLORAN
(calling to him)
It's Sonny, Ned. He says take it easy.
(listens, then holds the phone towards Ned)
He wants to talk to you.

NED
(his face darkens)
Tell him I can't. I've got to go. Say hello for me.

Hurriedly, he puts on his shorts.

MR. HALLORAN
(into the phone)
He has to go, Sonny, he ..
says hello.

He hangs up abruptly. Mrs. Halloran is busily stapling tickets. Mr. Halloran hurries after Ned.

MR. HALLORAN
I do hope you're not offended, Ned, because we couldn't be of help.

NED
I don't recall asking you for help.

MR. HALLORAN
Oh dear, I thought -- how're Lucinda and the girls?

NED
They're fine. They're -- home playing tennis. Thank you for the swim.

MRS. HALLORAN
Goodbye Neddy --

MR. HALLORAN
Have a nice trip!

Ned pushes through the hedge and disappears.

CUT TO:

THE GILMARTINS

Ned, followed by the little dog, turns up a narrow road marked "Private -- No Trespassing". Several large estates widely separated from each other are on this road. Ned approaches the first driveway which winds up to a large house set among trees and shrubbery and almost obscured from our view.

A large dog gallops down the road. He and the little dog sniff at each other.

At the entrance to the drive a small boy has set up an orange crate counter on which he has a pitcher of iced lemonade and some paper cups. The boy, wearing only swimming trunks, is sitting on a stool behind the counter playing a simple tune on a "beginner's" recorder.

He is about eleven years old, very thin, with silky fair hair and sensitive uneaven features. It is obvious that very few cars come up this road and probably no pedestrians.

The sky has darkened by this time and the sight of the frail, half-naked boy, the plaintive sound of the recorder in the quiet emphasizes the mood of aching loneliness.

The boy does not put down the recorder until Ned is almost upon him.

NED
Hi.

BOY
Hi.

NED
(indicating big dog)
That your dog?

BOY
(shakes head)
I can't have any pets. I'm allergic.

During the following the two dogs run off and frisk along the road together.

NED
(looking at the lemonade)
Say, how about pouring me a cup?

BOY
(firmly)
Five cents.
(he glances skeptically at Ned in his wet trunks)

NED
I'll owe it to you.

BOY
(cynically)
How do I know I'll ever collect?

NED
I'll drop around tomorrow and pay you.

The boy looks skeptical.

NED
Scout's honor!

The boy looks even more skeptical.

NED
(urgently -- it matters)
I look honest, don't I?

BOY
Looks don't tell anything.

He has filled the cup and now he hands it to Ned. Ned's hand is shaking as he takes it.

BOY
You're shivering.

NED
(ignoring this)
How's the lemonade business?

BOY
Oh I just set it up in case anyone did come along. My mother says you've got to get ready for things to happen because they always do.

NED
I know your mother -- she's a wise woman.

BOY
She's in Europe. It's a honeymoon so she couldn't take me.

NED
How's your father?

BOY
He's playing the field in Southampton. That's what my mother says. I have to depend on her for information.

NED
Don't you see him?

BOY
(shakes head)
He never was much fun. I'm not missing anything.

NED
You all alone here?

BOY
There's a maid.

NED
Know what? I'm going to invite you over to our house. I've got two girls you can play with.

BOY
How big?

NED
About your size.

BOY
Do <u>you</u> play with them?

NED
Sure, we play catch and tennis. We go bike riding together --

BOY
(matter-of-factly)
I have an English racing bike!

NED
You bring it over. We'll race you.
(he puts his empty cup down)

BOY
Want another? You'll owe me ten cents.

NED
Haven't time. I'm swimming home.

Boy gives him a look.

Mind if I use your pool?

BOY
Not at all. Go ahead.

Ned starts up the drive. The Boy picks up his recorder and follows him.

NED
You know those girls of mine are like a couple of wild cats! When I get home from the office they pounce on me! They nearly hug the breath out of me.

BOY
What games do they play?

NED
Cops and robbers, touch football --

BOY
They play chess?

NED
Gee, we haven't tried that.

BOY
Chess is a <u>brainy</u> game.

During the foregoing we have seen the pool as they approach it. Now as they come closer Ned realizes it is drained.

NED
(dismayed)
It's empty!

He crosses to the edge and stares disconsolately down at the concrete rectangle.

NED
God this does it! This <u>really</u> does it.

He sits wearily. The boy beside him.

NED
My whole project's ruined. I don't know what to do.

The boy looks at his forlorn face. He senses Ned's vulnerability and for the first time is drawn to him.

BOY
(unhappily)
They took the water out because I'm not a good swimmer. I'm bad at sports. At school nobody wants me on their team.

NED
It's a lot better that way -- take it from me. At first you think it's the end of the world because you're not on the team and then --

BOY
(eagerly)
Then what?

NED
You realize you're free. You're your own man. You don't have to worry about getting to be captain and all that creepy stuff.

BOY
They'd never elect me captain in a million years.

NED
You're the captain of your soul. That's what counts. Know what I mean?

The boy nods gravely. They sit in silence for a moment.

NED
There's one thing I could do. I could get down there and make believe I'm swimming across the pool.

BOY
Wouldn't that be cheating?

NED
Not if I did all the strokes exactly as if I were in the water.

BOY
(happily)
That's a good idea.

NED
(he rises)
Okay, let's do it.

BOY
Me too?

NED
While we're at it we'll make believe you're the champion swimmer of the world!

Delighted, the boy follows him to the shallow end of the pool. They jump down to the concrete bottom.

NED
All set? Let's start off with a crawl.

Walking side by side and stroking as if they are really in the water they start off.

NED
That's right, Keep your fingers close together. Say you've got very good form.

BOY
I've had lots of lessons. It's just that I'm afraid of the water.

They continue about a third of the way.

NED
Okay now, change to the side stroke.

They do so.

NED
Know what we do in the winter? We flood our tennis court and we ice skate on it. Those kids look so damn cute, Like a couple of elves in those little red caps -- stocking caps --

BOY
I don't know how to skate.

NED
You come over next winter and I'll teach you. The we'll have a hockey game!

BOY
(joyfully)
Okay!

They have gone another third of the way.

NED
Breast stroke!

They pantomime the breast stroke.

NED
Yes sir! Those kids of mine think I've got all the answers! Those kids think I'm just about it!

They arrive at the end of the pool.

BOY
(jubilant)
I've done it! It's the first time I've ever swum the whole length.

NED
Congratulations.

BOY
(suddenly crestfallen)
The kids'll say it doesn't count because there's no water.

NED
For us, there was.

BOY
(looking at him curiously)
Well -- that's a lie, isn't it?

NED
No. You see if you make believe hard enough that something's true -- then it is true -- for you.

They climb up the ladder.

BOY
Let's do it again!

NED
I've got to be going.

BOY
Oh come on! Please!

NED
(shakes head)
It's getting late --

BOY
(coldly)
Okay, goodbye.

NED
I'm sorry. I'd like to but --

BOY.
(irritated, he's
been failed again)
Okay. If you're going to leave,
then leave.
(he turns away)

NED
I'll give you a ring tomorrow --
about coming over --

BOY
(totally mistrustful)
Oh, sure --

Ned starts off down the driveway. He has gone only a few yards when he hears the unmistakable sound of someone jumping up and down on the diving board. At first it doesn't register. Then he stops in his tracks, a look of intense alarm on his face. The same thought must occur to us as it occurs to him. The boy has been sold on make-believe. He is going to dive into the empty pool. Ned turns and dashes back. The boy is leaping hard up and down on the board, his back to Ned. Ned sprints to the pool, rushes right up onto the board and throws his arms around the boy from behind. The force of this action almost tumbles both of them off the board. They regain their balance. The boy looks at Ned, stunned and bewildered.

NED
It's okay -- it's okay.

BOY
What are you doing?

NED
I thought you were going to
dive --

BOY
(amazed)
Oh come on --

Ned releases the boy who turns and stares at him.

BOY
(as if explaining to a child)
There's no <u>water</u> in the pool!

Ned gives him a thoughtful look.

NED
Well -- so long, again.

He walks away, turning once to look back at the boy. When he is part way down the drive he hears the sound of the recorder playing the same tune as before. As he reaches the road, the dog trots over to join him.

CUT TO:

THE BISWANGERS

As the Biswangers would say, they are having a big "Affair". It is the same kind of poolside cocktail party as the Bunkers, yet the setting and guests are quite different. There is an air of vulgar display. The guests are expensively dressed in an over-stated style. No one is in a bathing suit and there is no one in the pool. The garden furniture is garish and on the lawn nearby is a tall plaster pink heron and a family of plaster ducks. The dog stays behind to play around them.

Grace and Henry Biswanger are the kind of people who ask the opthamalogist, the veterinarian, the real estate dealer to their parties as well as business friends. Grace Biswanger wears a wig, false eye lashes and a big diamond ring.

As Ned approaches the terrace we see that this is the kind of party where the men talk to the men and the women to the women.

Grace spots Ned immediately and comes towards him with a bellicose expression.

GRACE
(loudly)
Why, this party has everything, including a gate crasher!

A few people turn around to stare.

NED
(trying his usual charm)
Grace! I thought you'd be glad to see me!

GRACE
You never came when I invited you -- why should I be glad to see you now?

NED
I thought better late than --

GRACE
You thought wrong Buster.

NED
(politely)
As a gate-crasher, do I rate a drink?

GRACE
Suit yourself.

She turns her back on him and walks away. Ned weaves through the crowd towards the bar. He looks terribly naked in the midst of all these over-dressed people. Most of them simply stare at him. A few nod grudgingly. We see a couple whispering to each other, obviously about him.

Two or three people are standing at the bar. A bartender in a white coat is mixing drinks.

NED
Gin on the rocks, please.

The bartender nods.

NED
(friendly)
You're new, aren't you?

BARTENDER
How do ya mean, new?

NED
I mean I haven't seen you around -- at parties.

BARTENDER
(with a distinctly cool glance at his nakedness)
Depends what kinda parties you go to.

He puts the drink down in front of Ned and turns away to wait on someone else. Ned, who has always been pals with all the bartenders, is mystified at this mild rejection. He picks up his drink and wanders through the crowd. He comes upon Henry Biswanger displaying the lining of his jacket to two other men. He eavesdrops.

HENRY
... same silk as they use for the Cardinals' robes. Cost me eighty-five dollars in Rome.

FIRST MAN
(impressed)
Would have cost one hundred and eighty-five dollars here.

HENRY
Had about five fittings. Look at the workmanship on these buttonholes.

The men look.

HENRY
Eight-five dollars!

Ned has moved closer and is peering over their shoulders at the buttonholes too. Henry gives him an unfriendly stare.

HENRY
I didn't know you were expected.

NED
I wasn't.

HENRY
Making it on the cuff, huh?

NED
(holding up his glass)
One gin. One buck.

HENRY
(nasty)
Is that some kind of a crack?

NED
(with a charming smile)
Well, you're always talking about money.

NED (Contd)
(he turns away and says quietly to himself)
Worse than eating peas off a knife.

Ned moves casually through the crowd. A few people greet him but not warmly. A few turn away to avoid him. A white-coated waiter comes by with a tray. On it is a bowl of caviar and fixings. Ned stops him. Immediately an over-dressed brassy blonde joins him. She is very cute but not very bright.

BLONDE
(chummily, as she piles caviar on toast)
I could eat this stuff all day.
(she sees Ned hasn't made a move)
Aren't you having any?

NED
If you stand there --
(he puts his hands on her shoulders and moves her around in front of him)
So that Henry Biswanger can't see.

BLONDE
(giggling)
What's this all about?

NED
(taking some caviar)
He's liable to come over and tell me what it costs.

BLONDE
(seriously)
Four ounces for fourteen dollars.

NED
Wow!

BLONDE
(very flirtatious)
You a neighbor of the Biswangers?

Ned shakes his head.

Oh, you're a friend.

NED
Nope. They're not even on our Christmas card list.

BLONDE
Then what are you?

NED
I'm an explorer who has come to a stagnant bend in the stream --

BLONDE
(giggles)
I mean what are you doing here?

NED
Swimming home. This is the day Ned Merrill swims across the county!

BLONDE
You're funny!

NED
Want to come with me?

BLONDE
Where?

NED
Across the county.

BLONDE
Aren't you married?

NED
What's that got to do with it?

BLONDE
You divorced or what?

NED
Do you want to come or don't you?

BLONDE
It's too cold. Besides I haven't a suit.

NED
Borrow one.

BLONDE
How far is it?

NED
Is there anyone at this party you'd rather go on a long swim with?

BLONDE
(giggles)
I can't figure you out!

NED
Come on, you'll be my own true comrade on a river of sapphire pools!

BLONDE
(wrinkling her forehead)
What was that? About sapphires?

At this point a squat dark man in a plaid sports jacket hurries up to them. He grabs the blonde by the arm and starts to pull her away.

MAN
(angrily)
Janice! Come on!

BLONDE
(trying to tug away from him)
This is Mr. Ned Merrill.

MAN
(glaring)
I know who it is!

He pulls her away. As they go off Ned sees the man is talking furiously to her. He can't hear what the man's saying. Rather bored, he watches the blonde's bottom in her tight dress.

He moves on through the crowd and past a group of men. One of them is telling a story. The others are listening with broad grins. Ned stops and listens too.

FIRST MAN
... so he got hold of this chemical, see. Absolutely harmless, doesn't hurt you. Just -- if you do it in the pool the water turns purple. Vivian and Paul and Dick and Ruth came over -- and he warned them: "I got this chemical in the pool so don't do it in the pool." Then Ethel and Larry came. Ethel goes straight for the pool. Says she's dying to cool off -- you know. She gets in the pool and she's standing there in up to her waist yaking away, and suddenly all around her the water turns purple!

The listeners whoop and fall out with laughter.

NED
(distinctly)
I think that's a disgusting story.

As they turn..to see who has said this, Ned is already taking a running dive into the pool. In a few strokes he has come to the far end and hoists himself over the curb.

As he does so he sees a white-coated waiter carefully pushing a hot-dog wagon out of the kitchen door. It is gaily painted and shaded with a little striped umbrella. Ned squints towards it, frowning. Then suddenly, his expression changes to one of astonishment and alarm.

The waiter is now pushing the wagon across the grass towards the terrace. Ned runs over and intercepts him. The waiter stops.

NED
My God, this looks like my wagon!

The waiter waits ... Ned examines the painted sides.

I'm sure this is my wagon.

He opens it up and peers into the inside where the hot dogs and buns are being kept warm. Hastily he pushes several of them into an untidy pile. The waiter looks pained. Ned bends closer to examine the bottom of the wagon.

NED
(excited)
Hey, this is mine!
(straigtens up,
addresses the waiter)
How'd this thing get here?

The waiter shrugs.

I used to wheel my kids
around in it. See that?
(he points to something
at the bottom)
That's where Ellen put her
foot through and I mended
it with plywood. This is my
wagon, man!

By this time Grace and Henry Biswanger have noticed what's going on and approached along with several of the guests. During the following the guests react appropriately as supporters of the Biswangers.

GRACE
What's the trouble here?

NED
(quietly)
This is my hot-dog wagon.

HENRY
Well -- we bought it.

NED
Bought it!

GRACE
At a White Elephant Sale.

NED
It was in my basement. How the
hell did it get to a White Elephant
Sale?

HENRY
Your wife must have donated it --

NED
(trying to be patient)
She hadn't any right to do
that! She knows I'm crazy
about this thing --

HENRY
Take it up with her.

NED
Listen, I'll buy it back from you.

HENRY
Not interested.

NED
(eagerly)
I'll give you twice what you paid for it. I'll give you a hundred dollars!

HENRY
(laughs)
A hundred dollars! For that piece of junk.

NED
(slowly and distinctly)
I want to buy this wagon back. Name a price. I'll send you a check.

HENRY
Oh yea?
(to the others)
He'll send me a check.

NED
I'm taking this thing home with me.
(he gets a firm hold on the handles)

HENRY
Hands off, you!

He steps very close to Ned. His face is menacing.

You crashed in -- now crash the hell out!

Ned glances at the ring of hostile faces around him.

HENRY
Go on -- beat it!

Henry gives Ned a push which knocked him off balance, he stumbles, his ankle turns and he falls to the ground.

Ned's first impulse is to get up and punch Henry in the nose. In an instant he realizes that this would be way beneath his dignity. Ned gets to his feet.

NED
(quietly)
I'll have my lawyers get in touch with you tomorrow.

He turns and hobbling a bit on his weak ankle, he walks off slowly, his back straight, his head high.

HENRY
(calling after him)
Yeah, you do that.

He laughs loudly. There are a few laughs from the other guests.

CUT TO:

SHIRLEY ABBOTT SCENE

As Ned approaches approaches the pool we see a woman sitting on a beach mat on the terrace. Her name is Shirley Abbott. She is an actress in her early thirties -- striking looking with interesting mobile features. She does not look like any of the other women we have seen so far -- she is distinctly "other". She is wearing a bathing suit. On a small table beside her are several play scripts, cigarettes, sun tan lotion, dark glasses, etc.

As Ned gets nearer we can see that she has a magnifying glass in one hand, a pair of eyebrow tweezers in another and is concentrated on trying to get a sliver out of the bottom of her foot. She doesn't see Ned until he is almost upon her. When she does look up at him hurt and surprise flash across her face which almost at once becomes furious. Ned greets her with his most charming smile.

SHIRLEY
What the hell do you think you're doing -- barging in on me?

NED
(with open admiration)
New suit! Wow!

SHIRLEY
It's not new.

NED
I've never seen it before.

SHIRLEY
Will you tell me what you're doing here?

NED
I'm swimming across the county -- pool by pool ...

SHIRLEY
(disgusted)
Good Christ! Will you ever grow up?

She turns her attention back to the sliver. She is unsuccessful. Ned kneels in front of her.

NED
Let me try.

SHIRLEY
Go away --

NED
Oh come on, let me --

Gently he takes the tweezers from her and probes for the splinter.

I ever tell you I wanted to be a doctor when I was about eight years old -- starched whites, stethescope. I wanted to fix people where they hurt --

Shirley winches. He stops probing.

I'm sorry --

She shakes her head. He goes after the splinter again.

Then, one day I discovered people die. In spite of doctors -- in spite of everything --

He pulls up the tweezers.

Got it! Nope --

NED (Cont'd)
(he looks at her)
People die. That doesn't make sense, does it?

She doesn't answer. He goes after the splinter again. This time he gets it.

NED
There we are!
(he examines the splinter)
A regular redwood! You could cut a hole in it and drive a car through.

Shirley smiles in spite of herself. Ned smiles back at her. Suddenly bending over and kissing her foot:

NED
Oh, Shirley --

She kicks back at him hard, pushing him away, sending him sprawling.

NED
(puzzled)
What'd you do that for?

SHIRLEY
Keep away from me.

A pause. Ned rises slowly.

NED
You must be crazy. Everybody's gone crazy today. I've just come from the Biswangers. They snubbed me. Everyone at their party snubbed me --
(indignant)
They've even got my hot dog wagon and they won't give it back.

SHIRLEY
Your what?

NED
I painted it myself and put the little umbrella up. Always kept it down in the playroom where the ping-pong table is, remember?

SHIRLEY
(angrily)
I've never been in your house, remember?

NED
Lucinda gave it to a White Elephant sale.

SHIRLEY
(sarcastic)
I'm sure it was for a good cause.

NED
She hadn't any right. I ought to go straight home and give her hell --

SHIRLEY
What's keeping you?
(she turns over on the mat, her back to him)

Ned is hurt. His shoulders droop. He looks uncertainly at her back for a moment.

NED
I'm tired. Must have come six miles. Got any gin?

SHIRLEY
(impatiently)
Oh I suppose so --

He crosses to a drink tray set up on a table nearby and begins to mix a martini. His back is to Shirley. She is looking at him with pain. We have a sense that she has been deeply hurt by him, is still vulnerable to him, is covering it up with anger and sarcasm.

NED
We're running out of Vermouth.

SHIRLEY
We? Aren't you a little confused this afternoon.

NED
(turning)
Want one?

SHIRLEY
(her face hardening instantly)
No.

NED
Oh, come on, you always said I make the best martinis.

He turns back to the tray, mixes two drinks. This time Shirley's face stays hardened.

SHIRLEY
Well, how <u>is</u> the President of of the League of Women Voters?

NED
Who?

SHIRLEY
How is your <u>wife</u>?

NED
Oh, she's fine.

SHIRLEY
I've been away so long I haven't kept up with the news. Are all the waitresses in town certified non-venereal?

NED
(busy at the tray)
What?

SHIRLEY
Last I heard that was your wife's project. Physical checkups for food handlers.

NED
Oh. Oh yes.

SHIRLEY
Mrs. Edward Merrill, guardian of our hamburgers! Patron Saint of our pizza pie!

Ned crosses to her with the drinks. He hands her one and sits.

NED
(raising his glass)
Well, here's to sugar on our strawberries!

NED (Cont'd)
(she glares at him)
Well, cheers.

He takes a long drink, Immediately he visibly feels better.

NED
(expansively)
Remember last winter in Toronto? Room service sent up martinis and --

SHIRLEY
I wasn't in Toronto last winter.

NED
(remembering)
All that snow! I hired a horse and sleigh to take us from the hotel to the theatre!

SHIRLEY
That was the winter before last --

NED
We sang jingle-bells all the way, remember?
(he laughs)

SHIRLEY
All I recall about last winter is a quick drink in a Philadelphia railroad station.

NED
(his eyes flickering)
Which show was that?

SHIRLEY
You didn't come down to see the show. You came down to recite your duties and obligations as a husband and father.

NED
In Philadelphia?

SHIRLEY
Yep! You made it clear that I was like a little pill -- and you took me to put the spring back into your step.

NED
(suddenly remembering
and stricken)
Oh God! You cried!

SHIRLEY
Actresses cry easily, you fool.
Trick of the trade.

NED
It tore me apart to see you
crying --

SHIRLEY
You managed to pull yourself
together and take the train back
to your wife and kids --

Ned is recalling the scene with pain. She looks at him bitterly.

SHIRLEY
And I really thought we were
going to make it together. I
really thought we'd make it.

During the foregoing the dog has appeared on the terrace. Now he bounds over to Ned, leaps at him and licks his face.

SHIRLEY
Where'd he come from?

NED
(shrugs)
I petted him. So he followed
me --

SHIRLEY
Sounds familiar.

Ned reaches over to the tray, fills a glass with water and puts it down. The dog drinks thirstily.

SHIRLEY
Like me on our first dinner date.

NED
What?

SHIRLEY
The headwaiter put that mound
of caviar down in front of me
and I lapped it up like a puppy.
(she groans)

NED
What's the matter?

SHIRLEY
(looking past him)
First time I saw you I knew what you were all about. I knew you'd always had someone to squeeze your orange juice and fix your parking tickets. I knew your theatre seats were always front and center. I knew you'd never even had a tooth filled without novacaine. I was at that party trying to smile at a producer -- me, in my borrowed fur and a safety pin holding up my shoulder strap.

NED
(remembering, tenderly)
I kissed your safety pin.

SHIRLEY
(bitterly)
I was easy to get, wasn't I? Everything's always been easy for you.

Ned reaches over and gently removes her sun-glasses. Their eyes meet. A pause. He leans forward to kiss her on the mouth. She jerks back from him.

SHIRLEY
Get away from me!

NED
Shirley --

SHIRLEY
You think you can just reappear and move in again? You think I've been in a deep freeze while you've been playing house up on the hill?

She snatches her sun glasses back from him.

SHIRLEY
Will you please go? Someone's coming over. He'll be here any minute!

She throws herself back down on the mat and closes her eyes.

Ned begins to shiver visibly. He rubs his upper arms with his hands. He coughs slightly.

NED
(almost to himself)
Throat's sore. Must have gotten a chill --

He sees Shirley's terrycloth robe flung over a chair, crosses to it, puts it over his shoulders and holds it wrapped around himself.

NED
There. That's better.
(a pause. He is still shivering)
I haven't been so cold since -- God I don't remember when I've been so cold.
(no answer from Shirley. Pause)
Since those winters in Hanover, that's when.
(he looks at Shirley. Her lips tightened, her eyes closed)
Except I had my martini coat then --
(she ignores him. He smiles. His tone changes)
Hey Shirley, did I ever tell you about that coat?
(he crosses to sit beside her)
Did I?
(she sighs with annoyance and turns her head away)
I got to tell you about that racoon coat I had when I was at Dartmouth!

SHIRLEY
(exasperated)
Christ! Spare me the tales of your golden youth!

NED
(his enthusiasm growing)
But this is a great story!

SHIRLEY
I don't want to hear it.

NED
(plunging on)
When my father was at Dartmouth it was Prohibition, see? So he bought this raccoon coat and he took it to a shoemaker. He had the guy sew leather pockets in the lining -- one for gin, one for vermouth, a big one for a thermos of ice and a little one for a jar of olives. He designed himself a Martini coat!
(a disgusted reaction from Shirley)
Oh yes -- he had straps sewn in to hold a shaker!
(Ned laughs)
My old man!
(remembering)
Twenty five years later when I was a freshman he gave it to me. Brother, was I a sensation! I didn't carry any stuff around except to football games -- but I wore it all the time!

A strange, marvelously happy light has come into his eyes while he is reciting this and Shirley is aware of it now and looking at him, curiously moved.

NED
You know something, Shirley, that coat was the damndest, most wonderful thing I ever owned!
(he begins to shiver again)
If Lucinda gave that coat away to a White Elephant Sale I'll kill her. I swear I'll kill her!

His shivering has become almost uncontrollable. Shirley watches him with alarm. For the first time her voice is tender.

SHIRLEY
You're catching cold.
(he doesn't answer)
Listen, I'd better drive you home.

NED
(shaking his head)
No.

SHIRLEY
Ned, you're being foolish --

NED
(stubbornly)
I've got to swim home.

SHIRLEY
For the love of God, why?

NED
I don't know. I've just got to!

SHIRLEY
You'll catch pneumonia. Come on -- I'll get the car --
(she starts to get up. He pushes her back)

NED
(wildly)
I can't go in the car. It's impossible. How can I?

SHIRLEY
(exasperated)
What's the matter with you?
(he doesn't answer)
Okay. You never were long on common sense.

She picks up a bottle of sun tan lotion and starts applying it to her arms and legs. Ned watches her for a moment. His shivering subsides.

NED
Here, let me do your back.

SHIRLEY
No.

NED
Please let me.
(he pulls the bottle out of her hand)
Lie down. Go on. Lie down.

She utters a long sigh, then stretches out reluctantly on her stomach. Tenderly he rubs the oil on her back. Suddenly he stretches out beside her, his body very close to hers.

NED
Shirley --

SHIRLEY
(trying to push him)
Go away --

NED
(he puts his arm over her)
You don't want me to. You're lying.

SHIRLEY
I've lied to you a lot, but I'm not lying now!

She struggles to get away from him. Finally she wrests herself free, leaps up from the mat.

SHIRLEY
Don't touch me!

She runs to the pool and plunges in. He jumps up and follows her. She swims only a few strokes before he has caught her.

SHIRLEY
Stop it! Let go!

NED
We made love in this pool -- remember! Please -- please -- you loved it --

SHIRLEY
I lied!

He is trying to pull down the straps of her bathing suit. She is kicking and hitting at him.

NED
You loved it in the pool --

He has the straps of her bathing suit down. She is half naked. She continues to wrestle and struggle desperately with him. The bathing suit rips. Finally she pulls away from him and swims a few feet. She rushes, sobbing and outraged up the steps of the pool. Ned is standing waist high in the water. Holding her tattered suit up to cover her, Shirley screams at him.

SHIRLEY
I lied! I lied all the time. Telling you I loved it anywhere with you. You bored me to death.
(MORE)

SHIRLEY (Cont'd)
Boasting about your deals and your golf scores and your old girls and your old war and your old prep school and your old bloody duty to your wife and kids!

NED
(quietly)
You loved it.

SHIRLEY
I played a scene with you!

NED
(urgently)
You loved it.

SHIRLEY
It was a fake! I was fooling you! You met your match in me, you suburban stud! I'm an actress!

Her words are like a fist smashed into Ned's face. His eyes are wild, his mouth slack. He throws back his head and bellows to the sky.

NED
YOU LOVED IT!

Crying hysterically, Shirley turns and runs towards the house. She disappears inside. We hear the slam of the screen door. Ned's expression is stoney and vacant. After a moment he swims steadily, automatically to the end of the pool.

For the first time he does not hoist himself out. Wearily, he climbs up the ladder and starts across the lawn. Suddenly he remembers something. He looks around for the dog. The dog is nowhere in sight.

Ned whistles several times, peers behind some bushes, walks half way back to the pool and looks around again. He calls "Here boy! Here boy! Where are you boy? Come on -- where are you?" He becomes more and more anxious, calling and whistling.

He doesn't notice a sportscar has driven up the drive and stopped.

Ned calls, "Hey dog! Doggie! Where are you dog? Come on dog!"

He turns around to find the driver of the car has now crossed to the terrace and is staring at him. The man is about thirty, actory-y, dressed in elegant faggoty country clothes, carries a script under his arm.

Their eyes meet. The actor is looking at Ned as if he's a nut.

NED
You see a dog?

The actor shakes his head. After one final look around, Ned strides off. He crosses the lawn, walks down the drive, looking and whistling all the time.

Ned can't understand what's happened to the dog. He grows more and more anxious. Out on the quiet country road he keeps darting his eyes about hoping to find the animal. He keeps on whistling and calling as he walks.

The dog does not reappear. Ned stops for a final look around. Finally he realizes that the dog has indeed abandoned him.

Tired, alone and dragging his feet, he goes up on the road.

CUT TO:

THE THROUGHWAY

The Sunday traffic is heavy and cars of all descriptions whiz by. Ned is standing on the shoulder of the road waiting for a chance to get across. At a discreet several feet behind him sits the small dog.

It is by now late afternoon, at times the sun is covered by a cloud. Ned shivers from the cold. He looks pitiful in his half nakedness, his arms wound around his bare chest. Everytime he thinks he might have a chance to dash for the grass divider in the middle of the road, a car comes hurtling towards him and he jumps back.

He is the object of all kinds of scorn and ridicule from the occupants of the passing cars. Some peer at him as if he is crazy, some point and laugh, a beer can is thrown at him. He dodges it. Several people shout at him but he can't decipher the words. From the backs of station wagons little children make faces, thumbs in their ears waggle their fingers, or simply wave. No one makes the least attempt to slow up to let him cross. In fact some drivers, seeing his

intention, speed up as they approach him.

Ned feels the indignity of his position and appearance. He looks tense and miserable. He coughs. He hops up and down to warm himself.

Finally an old man tooling down the highway at fifteen miles an hour gives him a chance to cross. He dashes for the grass divider and makes it safely. Now he has to buck the long lines of traffic speeding in the other direction.

The same ridicule from this traffic is heaped upon him. He watches alertly for a chance to cross.

Finally there is a gap in the traffic and he sprints to the other side of the highway.

Dragging his feet, exhausted, he trudges slowly along the edge of the road for a while. Then he cuts away from the highway and down a slope.

He comes to a narrow road with two or three modest houses on it. In the yard of one of them a small pile of leaves is burning. A boy of about fourteen in levis, is raking up a few more leaves. Ned stops and stares at the fire.

NED
(finally)
Where'd all those leaves come from?

The boy is startled both by the question and Ned's appearance.

BOY
Huh?

Wearily, Ned plods on. From somewhere, not too far away, we hear the sound of a train whistle blowing.

CUT TO:

PUBLIC POOL

The Recreational Center Pool is guarded by a one-story red brick building dressed up with colonial touches such as white shutters and a fake bell tower.

Behind it we can see part of a huge pool enclosed by a high wire fence. At each end of the pool, their chairs perched on high white wooden platforms, are the lifeguards. We can hear the sound of the crowd shouting, laughing, splashing and constantly at irregular intervals the lifeguards' police whistles and then their bellowing through a public address system a series of

warning and instructions to the swimmers.

A middle aged man and woman carrying bathing suit bags are approaching the entrance. The man is bald and wears a loud sport shirt. The woman is plump and wears slacks. Their names are Howie and Lillian Hunsacker.

LILLIAN
(scanning the again overcast sky)
Going to rain.

HOWIE
What's it matter you'll be wet anyway.

At this point Ned walks rapidly past them and up to the turnstile ticket booth. Seeing him, the man pokes the woman. They both react sharply to Ned's presence. Howie's mouth tightens. Lillian gasps and glares. On the ticket booth is a sign:

"Adults -- 50¢
Children -- 25¢"

We see that Ned is arguing with the ticket-taker. He turns around in despair. The man and woman have caught up with him. Ned smiles with relief and recognition.

NED
Howie!

HOWIE
(icy)
Hello, Mr. Merrill.

NED
Howie, lend me fifty cents, will you?

LILLIAN
(angrily)
Don't you do it, Howie!

HOWIE
Why not? What's fifty cents more or less, considering?

He slaps a fifty cent piece down on the ticket booth.

NED
Thanks a lot, Howie.

He hurries inside. Lillian glowers after him.

Ned enters the men's locker room. There are a couple of people ahead of him at the counter where baskets for clothes and dog tags are given out. He gets into line until he realizes that he has no need for a basket. He starts to cross to the open door to the pool area.

ATTENDANT
(shouting)
Hey! Hey you! Hey you in the trunks!

Ned turns.

ATTENDANT
You take a shower?

Ned shakes his head.

ATTENDANT
Can'tcha read, buddy?

He points to a large sign. Ned looks at it.

"ALL SWIMMERS MUST TAKE A SHOWER BEFORE USING THE POOL.
ALL SWIMMERS MUST USE THE FOOT BATH.
ALL SWIMMERS MUST WEAR THEIR INDENTIFICATION DISCS."

Ned crosses to a shower booth, enters, closes the door, turns the water on full force, stands under it a split second, turns off the water and leaves the booth. He crosses to the open door again. An attendant beside the foot bath glares at his feet, battered, scratched and still filthy.

ATTENDANT
You take a shower?

Ned nods.

ATTENDANT
Faked it, huh? Go on back and wash those feet.

Wearily Ned crosses back to the showers. The booths are all occupied now. He feels dizzy. The room reels before his eyes. He closes his eyes and leans against a shower door for support. The door opens suddenly and Ned falls in upon the man coming out. It is Howie. Howie grabs him by the shoulders and pushes him back. Gives him a dirty look and walks past him. Ned enters the shower. This time he soaps his feet and rinses them under the water, wincing as he does so. They are bruised and sore. The soap hurts the cuts. Gently his

hands rub them again and again to get the dirt off. His dizziness returns for a moment. He supports himself against the side of the booth.

He comes out of the shower and crosses again to the attendant beside the door. The attendant gives him a surly look and then gazes at his feet with distaste.

ATTENDANT
Spread your toes.

Ned balances on one foot while he spreads his toes apart with his hands. The attendant peers into the crevices between them. Ned repeats this business with the other foot.

ATTENDANT
Bottoms.

Ned holds up the sole of each foot in turn. The attendant waves him on. He steps into the foot bath and through the door. He is in the pool area. The crowd in the area, the pool jammed with people, the shrill sound of voices confuses him at first. He looks about uncertain at which end of the pool to begin his swim. He finally figures out which is the deep end and crosses towards it. A couple of children run into him and almost knock him down.

LIFEGUARD
(through public address system)
Cut out the running, you two kids!
No running in the pool area!

Ned finds an empty place in the pool and plunges in. It is an awkward tired dive, his body is bent, his legs fly apart.

He comes up spluttering with disgust at the taste of the chlorine in the water. With difficulty he continues his way towards the other end of the pool having to keep his head above water to avoid collisions but even so bumped into, splashed and jostled.

As Ned is swimming we see that he is being watched grimly by Howie and Lillian now in their bathing suits, and another couple whom they have joined. The other couple are a few years younger than the Hunsackers but the expressions on their faces are equally sour. Their names are Jack and Sylvia Kaplan.

As Ned reaches the shallow end of the pool all four of them rise and approach the place where Ned will be getting out.

Ned has to stand up and walk through the last few feet of the pool since the water is barely higher than his knees. Immediately a whistle blows and the lifeguard's megaphone is pointed at him.

LIFEGUARD
(bellowing)
Hey you! You without the identification disc! Get outta the water!

He is not aware that he is being shouted at. He is eager to get out of the pool anyway. He hoists himself wearily over the edge of the pool.

The two couples have placed themselves so that they are sitting very close to the spot where Ned emerges. Their legs are stretched out so that they block his way. They make no attempt to move.

JACK
How do you like our water, Mr. Merrill?

NED
(with a friendly smile)
Hi, Jack! Sure is a lot of chlorine in it.

LILLIAN
You know how it is, town folks got germs.

JACK
(staring up at Ned)
Don't taste so good, huh?
(Ned is rubbing his eyes)
Burns your eyes a little? That's too bad.

HOWIE
Whatsa matter? Your friends pool run outta water?

JACK
(rising)
So how you been, Mr. Merrill, we don't see ya in town any more --

NED
(aware of their hostility but at the moment unable to understand it)
I -- I don't get in much anymore --

HOWIE
(rising)
Used to count on seein ya maybe four-five times a week in my place -- a few drinks, a hamburger maybe --

LILLIAN
(to Howie)
What ya waitin for? Ask him about his bill.

HOWIE
(to Ned)
You're the first dead-beat I ever got in my place.

JACK
How about me? I been carrying you for months now --

LILLIAN
(rises, along with Sylvia)
We're decent people trying to make a living --

NED
I -- I'm going to send you a check -- tomorrow --

HOWIE
You said that too often. That ain't good enough.

NED
I mean it Howie. I promise. Both of you.

The altercation has attracted the attention of some onlookers. A few people move in closer to listen.

JACK
(to Howie)
You shoulda seen the orders I sent out to his house. <u>French</u> strawberry jam his wife made me stock for her. American

me stock for her. American
(MORE)

JACK (Cont'd)
strawberries weren't good enough! Heartsa palm, heartsa artichoke, heartsa this, heartsa that -- some rich diet they had up there!

SYLVIA
(indicating her husband)
Heartsa Jack Kaplan, that's what you got! You used our market to feed your kids. We got kids too you know!

LILLIAN
What's more we bring up our kids to behave themselves. Our kids don't go around drunk wrecking cars.

HOWIE
(to Jack)
He kept his girl's name outta the papers that time. He paid off somebody.

JACK
Bet that check didn't bounce!

LILLIAN
Couple a spoiled brats! What'll they do now when they can't buy their way through life?

NED
(angry)
You leave my daughters out of this!

A few more people have joined the group around Ned. He sees their curious or amused faces. He is embarrassed and humiliated. He feels hemmed in.

SYLVIA
It's your fault those kids don't pay attention to you.

NED
(livid, his voice shaking)
Listen, my girls worship me! I'm their father, and they love me and obey me and what I say is the law to those girls because -- because --

(MORE)

NED (Cont'd)
(he fumbles)
because I'm their father and they -- and they respect me and -- and --
(he is almost in tears)
and they love me -- they love me --

HOWIE
Yeah?

NED
Yeah!

HOWIE
Plenty a times I used to hear your kids talkin in my place.
(he smiles a thin smile at Ned)
I heard your girls givin you the razzberry. They thought you were a big joke!

This last wound triggers Ned into a panic. He feels suffocated by the ring of strange faces and bodies. All he can think of is that he must get out, get away. He thrusts blindly and enraged at Howie with such force that he pushes Howie backwards and flat onto the cement. The women scream. The lifeguard's whistle blows. A large crowd gathers in an instant. Ned dashes through the crowd, he leaps nimbly through groups of more people who have sat up from their prone positions and are staring at the cluster at the shallow end of the pool. He finds an exit door in the wire fence, unlatches it and rushes out. He runs past the handball courts, across a parking lot and up the road.

CUT TO:

THE CLYDES

The backyard of a small modest ranch house on a small modest lot. A half dozen adults -- men in loud sport shirts and shorts, women bulgy in peddle pushers and several small children are hurriedly dismantling what was to have been a picnic supper.

Apparently they have waited hoping it was not going to rain but now the sky is slate colored and the rumble of thunder frequent. A charcoal grill is already blazing but unused and they are taking plates of frankfurters, hamburgers, potato salad, trays of

beer, etc., into the kitchen.

In the center of the backyard is a very large round plastic pool. A few rubber toys float forlornly in the water.

Ned comes around the side of the house, shivering with cold, exhausted, walking with the greatest effort. The people in the yard stop what they are doing and stare at him.

Ned is transfixed at the sight of the pool. He stumbles towards it. With visible effort he swings one leg over the rim of the pool and then the other. The water barely reaches to the middle of his thigh. Smiling he crouches down in the water and begins to paddle across like a little child. The adults exchange glances. The children watch with mouths agape.

MAN
(low voice)
What the hell's going on?

MR. CLYDE
Soused.

MAN
You know him?

MR. CLYDE
(gesturing up the hill)
That's his house up there.

Ned is half way across. A large inflated rubber duck is floating across his path. He rests his cheek on it.

WOMAN
(laughing)
Look at that!

ANOTHER WOMAN
(laughing)
Makes himself right at home!

MAN
(laughing)
Soused out of his skull.

Then the children take their cue from the adults and laugh too. A little boy tosses a soft rubber beach ball at Ned as he paddles on across the pool.

Ned climbs out with enormous effort. He starts to stagger around towards the front of the house.

Mrs. Clyde is standing in his path. When he reaches her he stops, bows and raises her hand to his lips. Then he drops her hand and continues towards the road. The group watches him in silence.

He is weaving a bit from side to side as he climbs the narrow dirt road. His chest is heaving as if every breath takes all his strength. From time to time he coughs.

His foot slips on the loose gravel and he falls to his knees. We feel he may never get up. He struggles to his feet. The water from his wet hair is trickling down his face. He wipes it away, leaving the dirt of the road in streaks on his face.

He comes to a gatepost of his own driveway. Stops and clings to it for support. There is a streak of lightning over head and we hear thunder very loud and close. A few drops of rain spatter down.

The rain seems to rouse him a bit. He leaves the gatepost and plods up the curving driveway stooped with exhaustion.

Ahead of him we see his house -- large, grand, rather formal -- perhaps a Georgian facade. It is set on a wide and spacious lawn. A tennis court is visible at one side and to the back. Once in a while lightning illuminates the entire scene.

The rain drops are more frequent now. With a last spurt of energy Ned quickens his step. The crescent-sharped drive curves up to the front door. He manages a limping run the last few yards to the house.

He turns the knob and pushes at the door in his hurry to get inside. The door is locked. He is astounded and tries the knob again. The door will not budge. He frowns with confusion and turns the knob frantically back and forth.

Now the rain is coming in a downpour. He pounds on the door. He tries to force it open with his shoulder. The rain is flooding down upon him. Suddenly one of the gutters breaks loose and swings over the front of the house gashing his face lightly as it goes by. The gutter hangs down like an umbrella rib.

Blood trickles from the cut on Ned's face. In desperation he beats his fists against the door. Lightning flashes over the house. Thunder roars above. Ned shouts -- not words but deep bellows of

anguish.

The door is solid. By contrast Ned's flailing fists seem puny and fragile. He beats continuously at the impervious oak. The veins stand out in his neck as he shouts convulsively from his very guts.

We see his agonized face streaked with rain and blood and the terror in his eyes while above him his fists pound and pound.

Slowly the CAMERA pulls away from Ned and tracks along the front of the house to a large window behind which is the unlit and dimly visible living room. The CAMERA hesitates and then as a disembodied intelligence moves through the window and enters the room.

The moment the CAMERA enters the room Ned's pounding and shouts drop sharply in volume. Later as we move through the house away from the door, they grow distant and muffled.

We are in the living room of the house -- totally empty. Beautiful molding and paneling, rectangles of pale paint on the wall where pictures once hung, fireplace with andirons still in it but tarnished -- a worn broom leaning against one wall.

We travel the length of this room through a door which leads us into the library. The shelves are empty -- perhaps a tattered telephone book on one of them and on the floor a telephone.

Not hesitating the CAMERA moves through this room and into a small bar, also totally empty except for some kind of humorous corkscrew lying on the counter.

We move on to the kitchen. By this time the sounds of Ned are barely audible. The kitchen is large, well-equipped but worn and dusty. We see a small bulletin board with one or two scraps of paper fastened to it still. As the CAMERA passes the board we may read something entirely neutral on the papers -- e.g. "Mr. Seligman -- slip covers -- CA 7-4333".

We travel through the kitchen and through an open door into a large formal dining room, also paneled, also with a fireplace. One of the electric sconces has come loose and is hanging by its cord against the wall.

We leave the dining room through a spacious archway to the front hall. Across the hall we see the living room. We travel along the wide hall towards the front door, which is flanked by two narrow windows. Though we are now approaching the source, the sound of Ned's

pounding his diminished.

We move closer and closer to the door. Our attention is centered on the door knob which is turning back and forth, back and forth.

CAMERA continues its inexorable move toward the door knob. At the last possible instant before the knob fills the frame, CAMERA slowly veers to the left and goes through the narrow window at the side of the door. As we emerge from the house, it is dark. The rain has lessened. We turn now to the right to see Ned's limp hand slowly turning the door knob. CAMERA TRACKS up his arm, past his shoulder and neck until his face, which is resting against the door of the house, fills the frame. He is sobbing, exhausted, finished. CAMERA moves in still further to an ECU of his eyes. They stream tears as we slowly

FADE TO BLACK

ALTERNATE ENDING

Slowly the CAMERA pulls away from Ned and tracks along the front of the house to a large window behind which is the unlit and dimly visible living room. The CAMERA hesitates and then as a disembodied intelligence moves through the window and enters the room.

The moment the CAMERA enters the room Ned's pounding and shouts drop sharply in volume. We are in the living room of the house totally empty, rectangles of pale paint on the wall where pictures once hung, tarnished andirons, a worn broom leaning against one wall. Through a wide arch at the end of the room we see part of a totally empty dining room. The CAMERA moves through an open door into a small library, its shelves empty except for a tattered telephone bock.

The CAMERA moves through the library and into the wide front hall, also totally empty, a few holes in the wall where paintings have hung, the dark outlines of what must have been a low-boy against the wall.

In the hall the CAMERA is facing the large heavy front door. We see the door knob turning back and forth, back and forth and hear the jerky rythms of Ned's pounding outside.

The CAMERA holds on the empty hall and the door and now, super-imposed over this shot which continues to dominate, a series of shots from earlier sequences of the film. One piles upon the other, each so phantomed as not to obscure the underlying shot.

They overlay in a varied, random rythm, accented but to timed the building tempo of Ned's fist pounding louder and louder on the door. The shots need not be in sequence, they are flashes of significant moments from his journey "home".

The cutting gets faster and faster (the last shot may be a flash-cut of the front of the house as he saw it in the rain). As this last overlay is added the pounding, in fact all sound, come to a stop.

Quick cut to Ned outside the door. He is slumped against it, sobbing, exhausted, finished. CAMERA moves in closer for a CU of his face and then closer for an ECU of his eyes. They stream with tears as we slowly ...

FADE TO BLACK

1 Open - Wooded land.

2 Country Lane

3 (Phone Booth)

4 Road.

5 Country Road.

6 Throughway.

7 PASTERN'S Riding Ring

POOLS

1. Westerhazy
2. Grahams
3. Hammar
4. Lears
5. Bunkers
6. Halloran
7. Gilmartins
8. Biswangers
9. Shirley Abbott
10. Public Pool
11. Clydes (Plastic

8 NED MERILL'S HOME

Pohlmann

Gardner Cowles

Sam Aquinac

Tallulah Bankhead (Westover)

James Gardner

Robt Gruet

Sunnyfield Farm (Hartford)

West Point - Sid + Pauline Kates